

Bible

THE

[Eng]

PROVERBS

OF

SOLOMON

PARAPHRASED:

With the

ARGUMENTS

OF

EACH CHAPTER

Which supply the place of

A COMMENTARY.

By SYMON PATRICK, D.D.

Now Lord Bishop of Ely.

L O N D O N,

Printed by J. H. for Luke Meredith, at the Star
in St. Paul's Church-Yard, MDCXCIV.



R. White delin.

sc. sculpsit

Effigies Reverendi in Christo Patris D.
Simonis Patrick Eliensis Episcopi.

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TO
HER GRACE
The Dutcheſs of
MONMOUTH.

MADAM,

THere were anciently ſo many Noble Women, as well as Men, who, even then made the ſtudy of the Scripture their delight, when Chriſtian Piety began to decay; that a great part of *S. Hierom's* pains was beſtowed in opening the meaning of them to *Bleſilla*, *Marcella*, *Melania*, *Paula*, and her Daughter *Euſtochium*, with ſeveral other eminent Roman Ladies: *whoſe Songs* (as he writes to *Aſella*) *were nothing but Pſalms; whoſe diſcourſe was the Goſpel; whoſe pleaſure was continence; and whoſe life was faſting and abſtinence.*

More particularly he addreſſed his
A 3 ſervices

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services of this kind, to the last of those Ladies, *Eustochium*; to whom he gives an Epithet, importing her prodigious industry, with the most fervent desire, in the study of heavenly knowledge: and therefore inscribed to her the most elaborate of all his Commentaries upon the Prophet *Isaiah* (as he did afterward those upon *Ezekiel*) which were sent her by parts in *XVIII.* Books; before every one of which there is a solemn Preface to her.

By whose example, and to heighten that esteem and love of Divine Wisdom, wherewith, in an age of folly and vanity, God hath already inspired your excellent mind, I have presumed to dedicate to your GRACE this small Work of mine; wherein, with no small labour, I have expounded the most usefull Book of the *PROVERBS*.

Which commends it self to your Grace's acceptance, both by the excellence of the matter; containing (as the words are *VIII. 6. XXII. 29.*) most noble and princely

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princely things; choice Maxims, built upon the oldest Observations, and that will stand firm and be found true, as long as the world endures: and from the *dignity and splendour of the Authour*; whose illustrious name and pedigree, is set down on purpose (as *S. Basil* thinks) in the entrance of the Book, to give the greater Authority to his words.

It is *SOLOMON*, to whom the Lord himself said, *1 Kings III. 12. Behold, I have given thee a wise, and an understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee: And again, it is recorded of him there, IV. 29. That God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.* For as the Sand of the Sea incompasses all the Coasts of this World wherein we inhabit; so did his Mind comprehend all things, as well Humane as Divine.

This is that admirable Person, to the study of whose rare Wisdom I invite

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your *Grace*: which, that it may be had in greater Veneration, the name also of his Mighty Ancestour, saith the same *S. Basil*, is added in the Title unto his own: to put us in mind, that he was the wise Son of a wise Father and Prophet, who from his infancy had instructed him in the holy Writings, and made him fit to succeed him in his Throne.

That likewise contributes not a little to the weight of these Instructions, that the Authour of them was a KING; and a *King* in the holy City of God, whose Authority he had; which being a name of regular and legal Power (as the same *Father* still observes) it is manifest that the Precepts delivered by such a Person, and one who was truly worthy of that high Title of a *King*, are of the greatest worth and moment: because they have respect to nothing but merely the common benefit, and publick good; and cannot be suspected to have been framed and composed with any aim at private interest. For that is the difference, saith he,

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he, between a Tyrant and a King : that the former hath regard only to himself in all that he doth and designs ; but the other consults the profit and welfare of those whom he governs.

So that, in short, this is the Work of him, who was truly invested with that threefold glory, which the Ancients ascribe to *Trismegistus* ; the power of a King, the illumination of a Priest, and the learning of a Philosopher.

But the excellence of this Book will be best understood by the serious perusal of it ; which will discover it to be a Magazine of all sorts of Wisdom : *so full of golden Sentences* (as King James gives its character in his Instructions to his Son) *and moral Precepts, in all things that concern our conversation in this world, as among all the prophane Philosophers and Poets, there is not to be found so rich a Storehouse of Natural Wisdom, agreeing with the Will and Divine Wisdom of God.*

And therefore it is most worthy the constant study of all persons, who
would

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would accomplish themselves with the most usefull knowledge: but of none more, than of those that are Great, whom *Solomon* instructs how to be Greater, and to make their Greatness also lasting and durable: and especially of such whose Understandings are great and Capacious, able to penetrate into the depths even of the Civil Precepts and Advertisements contained in this Book; *springing* (as our great Advancer of Learning speaks) *out of the most profound secrets of Wisdom, and flowing over into a large field of variety.*

In which I am confident your Grace will delight to walk: whose exquisite Judgment cannot but find the highest entertainment, in weighing the Wisdom, as well as the Truth, and Usefulness of these Parables: and whose Vertue and Prudence disposes the hours of your life with such order, as not to let you want time, both to ponder them your self, and to instill them also into the Mind of your Children,

Whose

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Whose future happiness depends upon their being early seasoned with such Principles as these: which will be the most effectual Preservatives against the infectious air wherein we breathe; and a Treasure of such inestimable price, as will keep their Minds from being corrupted, by all the briberies of Fortune (as we call it) or from being dejected at any cross turn of it; which, in this world, must be sometimes expected.

For such is the inconstancy of all humane things, such is the frailty even of our own bodies, as your Grace hath been lately taught by a tedious Sickness (from which I most heartily congratulate your Grace's happy recovery) that we love not our selves, if we seek not after a better Good, which is firm and permanent: a Good that can withstand Corruption, and defend it self against the force of time, and all the accidents of this World.

In the prosecution of which supreme Good, I commend your Grace to the
Bles

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Blessing of the Almighty; who always favours the least desires of being good; and therefore will never desert your sincere indeavours of it: which are not unknown to Him, while you prefer the Closet to the Theatre, and look more to the inside of Vertue, than to its outward appearances.

But I forget my self; and stand in need of a pardon for this long Address: which I shall the more easily obtain, if your Grace please to believe nothing emboldned me to it, but the opinion I have that your Goodness is as unlimited as my desires to approve my self, what I stand bound by many obligations to be,

May it please your Grace,

Your Grace's most humble,

and obedient Servant,

S. Patrick,

THE P R E F A C E.

I. **N**ext to the Psalms of David, which are an admirable Collection of Devotion, follow the Proverbs of Solomon, which contain most excellent Rules of life. They are commonly called his Ethicks; correcting men's errors, and teaching them how to conduct themselves in all relations: but may as well be called his Politicks also, comprehending under that word, Rules for the Government of Families, Cities and Kingdoms, as well as of particular Persons. For, as S. Basil speaks, this Book is, *ὡς διδασκαλία* *βίη*, an universal instruction and direction for all men, and for the whole life: containing frequent documents of what is to be done on all occasions.

II. And there being two ways of teaching; one by brief Sentences, and Aphorisms, which are delivered also promiscuously, without any great care about the order of them; the other by methodical Discourse, according to the Rules of Logick, proceeding orderly from one thing to another, till all that belongs to the matter in hand, be reduced



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reduced to one body, and make as it were an intire building: Solomon hath chosen the first way, which was the most ancient; as it would be very easie to shew, were there any necessity of it; and were not the great antiquity of this sententious way of speaking, apparent enough from that passage of David's 1 Sam. XXIV. 13. As saith the Proverb of the Ancients; wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: which is much like that Greek Adage, κακὸς νόσος κακὸν αἶμα. For it was very usual with Wise men of old (as the Lord Bacon observes, in his Eighth Book of the Advancement of Learning) when their observation light upon any thing that might prove beneficial unto common life, to reduce it immediately and contract it, either into some short Sentence or Parable; or else into a Fable. As for Fables, they were only the Substitutes and Supplements of Examples; to serve instead of them, while they were wanting, and no longer: when the world abounded with Histories, they became unnecessary, because the shadows of things are usefull onely where the substance cannot be had; and because the aim is more exact, and more pleasant, when the mark is alive. Then those Fables were to give place to the sententious way of Instruction, comprising wise observations in a few words; which could be illustrated and enforced by a multitude of examples.

III. *And therefore in the fabulous times, we find those even among the Poets, who forsook Fables,*

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bles, and betook themselves to this more profitable way of Instruction: particularly Phocylides and Theognis, whom Julian the Apostate is bold not only to compare with Solomon, but to prefer before him. To whom S. Cyril of Alexandria very judiciously answers (*Lib. 7. adv. Jul.*) that as Solomon's Work is of far greater Antiquity, he being contemporary with Homer himself, and they living a long time after, with Solon and Thales, in the reign of Croesus: so it is infinitely more weighty than theirs. Who said indeed some pretty, spruce things, but so weak and shallow in comparison with the manly and deep sense of Solomon's Proverbs; that they were fit only for the use of Nurses to prattle to their Babes; or at the most for Pædagogues to teach little Boys. There is not, for instance, such a wise instruction to be found in all their Books, as the very first of all in Solomon's, which he lays as the ground of all wisdom (but they, alas! did not think of) that The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. This, as S. Basil observes, is that *Καθ' ἡσυχίαν* *ἰσχυρῶς* (which their Philosophers so much talkt of, but did not understand) the only thing that can purge the soul, and prepare it to be capable of Instruction: which it is as improper, says he, to give to a man of impure affections, as it is to pour a precious ointment into a sordid, filthy Vessel.

The like I might say of another most admirable Precept in his Book, to dispose the soul for wisdom, viz. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart,

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heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. There is no such word in all their Writings; nor in Isocrates neither (whom that Apostate Prince vainly magnified likewise above Solomon) who may be praised for some profitable lessons he gave to youth, but must stoop, as S. Cyril speaks, to this great person; who as he wrote long before him, so far outwent him in all sort of wisdom, for the instruction both of young and old. Nor doth he only give precepts of manners, but many excellent admonitions about rewards and punishments; together with lively descriptions of the events of humane actions; which serve much for our information. Many things also he discovers of mens most secret affections; of the causes and grounds of the greatest changes in humane affairs; of the principal things, that are of greatest moment in Government; of the way to avoid all manner of dangers, and to preserve our selves, our fame, our estates: with so many other things of like nature, that the Son of Syrack justly said of him, Eccclus. XLVII. 14, 15. He was as a fount filled with understanding. His Soul covered the whole earth, and he filled it with dark Parables.

IV. By that name some call these short Sentences, which we call Proverbs: though the word Parable properly signifies only a comparison or similitude. The original of which name is this (as Grotius hath observed in his Prolegomena to Stobæus) that the most ancient Authours delivered

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vered their precepts about manners, or about government, by comparisons: either full and at length (which the Rhetoricians properly call *ὑποβολή*, parable) or curtail'd, as we speak, and shortned. And these taken either from things plainly fabulous (as that of the Fruit-trees and the Bramble, in Judges IX. and that of the Thistle and the Cedar, 2 Chro. XXV. 18. of the Hawk and Nightingale in Hesiod; the Wolfs, Dogs and Sheep in Demosthenes; and the famous parable of Menenius about the Members of our Body) or else from things likely and probable, as that of Nathan to David, and most of our blessed Saviour's.

V. But Solomon's Sentences in this Book are not of this Nature, and therefore the LXX. use another word, signifying a saying as trite and common as the high way; worn, as we say, threadbare (to use S. Basil's phrase) by every bodies constant use. And so doth the Latin and our English word Proverb, denote some ancient common Saying, which every body hath in his mouth. But the word in the Hebrew denotes only any acute and excellent Saying; which is as worthy to be known by all, and to be in every one's mouth, as common Proverbs are. And thus it is used in the most ancient Book of Holy Scripture for an eloquent speech, much exceeding those that had been made before, in the beginning of the XXVII. and XXIX. of Job. And so the Doctours of the Church explain it. A Proverb,

a

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verb, *saith* S. Basil, is a profitable Saying, delivered with a moderate concealment of the sence, &c. or a pithy Sentence in a few words expressing much sence.

This is the first signification of the word: tho' in after-times, every Saying that was never so little out of the way of vulgar speech, began by the Hebrews to be called Mashall; as may be seen in Ezek. XX. 49. And whether it was figurative, or simple and plain, if it did contain any profitable Instruction, it was called by the same Name; as we learn from the Sentences in this Book.

VI. Which consists of a Preface, and of the Book it self. The Preface is in the nine first Chapters: seven of which seem to be an Admonition what is to be done, and what to be avoided, to make a man capable of Wisdom: which in the eighth and ninth Chapters sets forth her own praises.

Then begins, as you find in the front of the tenth Chapter, the Proverbs of Solomon: which consist of three Parts, or Books. The first Part, from the beginning of the tenth Chapter, to the seventeenth verse of the XXXII. where a new form of speech, any body may discern, begins (as I have there noted) and continues to the XXVth. Chapter: which may be called the second Part. And then from the XXVth. to the XXXth. (which is the last Part) follow such Sentences as were collected afterwards out
of

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of his Writings, or the Writings of those who had recorded them; by some persons whom Hezekiah employed to search the ancient Records. For we are told in 1 King. IV. that he spake in all three thousand Proverbs: which Josephus seems to think were so many Books that perished in the Captivity; but S. Hierom takes for so many Sentences contained in this Book: that is, some of them, for there are in all but 800 verses. And some of them are not Solomon's; for in the end of the Book are added certain Sayings of Agur to his Scholars, and the Instructions of a pious Mother to her Son Lemuel: of all which I have given an account in their proper places.

VII. And therefore must intreat all those that would profit by this Book to read the Argument of each Chapter, before they proceed to the Paraphrase: or at least to consult the References which I have made to such passages in it as will help to make the sense clearer, or to explain difficult places; which sometimes are capable of more senses than one: and therefore if I have not represented them all in the Paraphrase, I do it in the Argument: designing all along this alone, to give the fullest and properest explication of every phrase; upon which, as I have not dilated, so I have expressed the meaning in the plainest words I could find. For, as S. Hierom speaks concerning his own Commentaries upon Ezekiel (in the Preface to the Vth. Book) my business was not to study the Art of Rhetorick, nor of ex-

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act composition, and gracefull language; but to use a carefull diligence to hit the sence: resting content with this praise alone, if the Wise-man's words be understood by my means. *And indeed it ought to be the design of every good man, in such Works as these, that the Holy Books (as he speaks in another place) may be made more intelligible and acceptable by his endeavours; and not that his own Writings may be commended, by occasion of those Books.*

VIII. *And in his time nothing was commended, he saith, but onely that which men fantasied to be Eloquence. In this the Latins were then altogether delighted; but nauseated the understanding of the Holy Scriptures. Which provoked God, in his just judgments, to deliver them into the hands of those rough Nations, who, in his days, broke in like a floud upon them; and turned their vain affectation of neatness and elegance of speech, into rudeness and barbarism: which ought to be a caution unto us, not to give up our selves, to the admiration onely of the language and of the wit of the Stage; lest our minds thereby be so depraved, that we have no relish of the most serious, no not of the sacred Writings, but reject them as insipid things: with which disease if any be infected, they might by God's grace, be cured; if they would be pleased to apply their mind with due attention to the study of this one Holy Book: which wants nothing to entertain the*

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the minds of all men, though of the widest capacity, with the greatest variety of pleasure; if they have not perfectly lost their taste of that which will doe them good, and make them truly happy.

IX. *It is recorded by Suetonius of Cæsar Augustus, that in his reading all sort of Greek, as well as Latin Authours, he chiefly observed, and transcribed such wholesome precepts or examples as might serve him either for publick or private use: which upon occasion he produced, for the Instruction of his own domesticks, or of the Commanders of his Armies, or the Governours of Provinces, or the Magistrates in his several Cities; according as he thought every one had need of Admonition: whom if any man have the heart to imitate, Solomon hath saved him the labour, which that great Person underwent. He need not turn over many Volumes, to search for all manner of wise Instructions; but he furnished here (and that at an easie rate) out of the vast treasure of Learning, he hath left us in this small Book, with the best Advices that can be given, either to Princes, Counsellours, Judges, and other publick Ministers; or to all sorts of Subjects in their several relations, and in every condition: to make them both pious and politick: to direct them in the choice of their Consorts; in the education of their Children; in the management of domestick affairs, and in their transactions with other men; in contracting or conducting their*
Friend.

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Friendships ; in giving or taking good counsel and reproof ; in making or preserving peace ; in judging of men , and of the event of their designs ; and in short (for it would be a new Book to mention every thing particularly) to instruct every one in all sorts of vertue ; especially in the Government of the Tongue ; wherein men offend , and whereby they suffer so much , that there is no part of prudence more necessary than that , and therefore none more insisted on in this Book.

X. Which contains the Wisdom of that excellent Prince , who could readily resolve all Questions and Doubts ; penetrate into the nature of all things ; and had his own Family and Kingdom , in such admirable order , that it astonished her who came from the ends of the earth , to discourse with him. And it was composed, if we may rely upon the judgment of the Jewish Writers , in his best and most judicious years ; when his Kingdom also was in perfect peace, and there was no disturbance in his affairs.

For the Book of Canticles, say they, was wrote in his youth ; the Proverbs, when he was of riper years ; the Ecclesiastes, when he was old, and repented of the sins he had been drawn into by the snares of Women : who had made this admirable Person as great an example of folly as he had been before of wisdom : whence that common saying of theirs ; Men compose Songs, when they are young ; Parables , when they are grown

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grown to be perfect men; and Discourses of the Vanity of things, when they are old.

XI. But the time of his writing these Books is not so material as the design: which is excellently expressed by S. Basil, in a Discourse of his upon the Beginning of this Book, (Tom. I. Hom. XII.) "The Book of Proverbs, saith he, is an Instruction of manners, and a Correction of the passions; and an intire direction of the whole life, containing abundance of precepts about well-doing. The Ecclesiastes touches upon the Nature of things; and evidently shews the vanity of every thing in this world: that so we may not think it worth our pains to be so solicitous as we are about things that swiftly pass away from us; nor waste the thoughts and cares of our mind about empty and vanishing enjoyments. The Song of Songs shews the manner of perfecting Souls. For it contains the happy concord of the Bridegroom and the Spouse: that is, the familiarity of the Soul with God the WORD.

XII. I conclude this Preface, as that great Man doth that Discourse. "He is wise, not onely who hath arrived at a compleat habit of Wisdom, but who hath made some progress towards it; nay who doth as yet but love it, or desire it, and listen to it. Such as these, by the reading of this Book, shall be made wiser; for they shall be instructed in much Divine

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" vine, and in no less *Humane Learning*: it expel-
" ling *Vice* divers ways ; and with, as great vari-
" ety, introducing all manner of *Vertues*. It bri-
" dles the injurious tongue ; corrects the wanton
" eye ; and ties the unjust hands in chains. It
" persecutes sloth ; chastises all absurd desires ;
" teaches *Prudence* ; raises mens courage ; and
" represents *Temperance* and *Chastity* after such
" a fashion, that one cannot but have them in
" veneration.

Let a man but consent to one thing, which this
Book desires, to make these *Precepts* familiar to
his mind, saying unto wisdom (as you find the
words, VII. 4.) thou art my sister, and calling
understanding his kinswoman : and he will not
fail to be happy. For this is the sum of all, in a
few words,

Love her, and she shall preserve thee.



A
PARAPHRASE
ON THE
PROVERBS.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

The Title of this Book is joined to it, as a part of the work, and contained in the six first verses. Where the Author uses several words to express the matter he intends to treat of, viz. Wisdom, Instruction, Understanding, Knowledge, &c. the difference of which I have expressed as well as I could in the Paraphrase, and shall not here criticize upon them. But observe rather that the learning they teach is the most necessary of all other; and therefore so contrived, as he tells us, that the most Ignorant as well as the most Wise may receive great benefit by it.

In order to which, the first principle of it must be carefully observed; which is this: [a] that a due sense of God is a most necessary qualification to profit by these Instructions; which will signifie nothing to Epicures, and such like profane persons. This is the very first word of the Book v. 7. teaching us, that our first care must be to possess our minds with a lively
B
sense;

sense, that there is a God; and that the highest Wisdom in the World is to study to please Him, and to know what will please Him; and to be fearfull to offend Him, by any neglect of Him, or by doing any thing contrary to his Will. Which fear of offending God is commonly founded in a dread of his punishments; which perhaps gives the first rise to this fear: however Nazianzen well observes (*Orat. XXXIX. p. 618.*) that we must not, if we would be wise, first begin in Contemplation, and so end in Fear; (for an unbridled Contemplation is very dangerous) but being thoroughly seasoned and purged, and as one may say attenuated, and humbled by Fear, so to be carried aloft in Contemplation.

This is the first step to Wisdom, and the second is; [b] next to God, to bear a great reverence to Parents, both natural and spiritual: to God's Ministers, that is, and to all Teachers and Instructors; to whom if Children be not bred to give a great regard, they seldom prove vertuous. v. 8. Where it is very observable how much Humane Laws differ from Divine: the former generally onely providing that due regard be given by Children to their Fathers, but taking no notice of Mothers; as may be seen in the Persian Laws mentioned by Aristotle, the Roman described in the Digests and Constitutions, and several passages of the Greek Philosophers, which we find in Epictetus and Simplicius, who (as Grotius notes upon the Fifth Commandment) consult onely the honour of the Father: but God in his Law takes care to preserve a just reverence both to Father and Mother equally; as the persons whose ministry He uses to bring us into the World. And accordingly not onely Solomon in this place and many other, but the Son of Sirach also (who was bred under that Divine Institution) presses the duty owing to both very largely; in the first sixteen verses of the III. of Ecclesiasticus.

Now

Now one of the first things Parents should take care of, is to teach their Children [c] to avoid evil Company (as it follows here v. 10.) and then to represent Vice in its true colours, as Solomon here doth one sort of wickedness, v. 11, 12, &c. the root of which he shews is love of Money: which therefore should be look'd upon as most odious; and indeed the root of all evil, v. 18, 19.

Their stupid blindness also is to be represented, who will take no warning: but though destruction be plainly before their eyes in the way wherein they are; yet will go on to complete their ruin, v. 17.

And they are to be admonished also to hearken to the voice of Wisdom presently, wheresoever they meet with it: which is every where, v. 20, &c. Which is pressed here (v. 24, &c.) from this consideration, that there will be a time when they shall stand in need of God's help; but not find it, if they have slighted his importunities to obedience. For He is not onely good but just also: and not so easie, as to be moved merely by Prayers and Intreaties (and that when we are in distress) which have more of self-love in them, than love to Him. Whose wise Providence requites men in their kind; and destroys them by that which they most desire.

"In short, in this Chapter he introduces Wisdom speaking to his Son, or to her Children in general; inviting them to love her, and by no means to tread in the way of Sinners: but to keep close to her directions; threatening destruction to those who contemned this Counsel.

There seem to be three Proverbial Sayings in it. One v. 17. which may be four or five ways interpreted: two of which I have comprised in the Paraphrase, being the most common and natural. Another v. 31. like to that in Terence, Tute hoc intrivisti, omne hoc vorandum est tibi. And the other in the

next v. 32. *Where those words, the prosperity of Fools shall destroy them, teach us that it is a great part of Wisdom, to be able to bear a great fortune, as we call it. Of which among the Jews Jason was an example in after times, who was undone by his Successes, 2 Maccab. v. 6, 7, &c.*

1. **T**HE proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel;

wise Prince, King Solomon, the son of that devout Prince, King David: by whose special appointment he succeeded him in the Government of God's peculiar People, *Israel*; for which (according to *David's Prayer LXXII. Psalm*, and his own *1 Kings III. 9.*) God indued him with an extraordinary degree of understanding.

2. To know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding;

instruct him how to avoid those errors which Men are apt to fall into, or to correct them if he hath been misled and run into them; and to make him understand when good advice is given him, nay, to be able to give it unto others.

3. To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

capable to understand things of highest concernment: both how to be just and good in all private transactions; and in publick trusts and offices to judge and act according to right and equity; and every other way, to be upright and exactly vertuous.

4. To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

1. **T**HIS Book contains some notable and very useful Sayings of that

2. The scope of them, is to make a Man know what it is to be truly wise; and

3. For they will furnish him with the most excellent notions, and make him

4. The most unskilfull and incautious persons, may here learn to be circumspect

cumspect and wary; and they who are childish and inconsiderate get so much knowledge, as to behave themselves with prudence and discretion.

5. *A wise man will bear, and will increase learning: and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels.*

And indeed it is principally designed for the improvement of him that is so wise, as to be willing to learn more: who shall both gain a clearer knowledge of what he understands; and also make such additions, that he shall be fit to be a counsellor to Kings, and govern the affairs of State in the greatest Kingdoms.

6. *To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.*

the weightiest sayings of wise men shall be easie to him; and their abstrusest notions shall not be hidden from him.

7. ¶ *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

a devout affection to Him, and fear to offend Him as the chiefest point, and the very foundation of all Wisdom: Without which men are but Fools; and, having no regard to their Creator, will despise the wisest Instructions that I can give them. See Arg. [A]

8. *My son, bear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:*

to reverence thy Parents. And not onely to hearken unto thy Father, when he teaches thee to fear God, or tells thee that thou dost amiss; but to let thy Mother's commands be a Law to thee;

5. As for him that is wise already, he will not lose his labour in reading this Book; which will

6. He shall comprehend the most useful Maxims; and be able to express them also with the greatest

7. ¶ In the first place then, let all, both simple and wise, look upon an awfull sense of God, a

8. And next to God let me advise thee, my Son (or whoever thou art that

especially when she bids thee observe the Directions of thy Tutors and publick Instructors, unto whom she commits thee: from which be sure never to depart. See Arg. [b]

9. *For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.*

9. But value their counsels more than the fairest ornaments thy Parents can put

upon thy head; or the most precious chains wherewith they can adorn thy neck: for they shall add a far greater grace unto thee; and make thee more acceptable both with God, and with all worthy men.

10. ¶ *My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.*

10. ¶ There will be those who will make it their business to se-

duce thee from their obedience; but remember, my Son, that none can love thee so well as they: and therefore if leud persons (who have no respect to God, or to their pious Parents and Instructors,) perswade thee to bear them company, by no means yield to their greatest importunities; but flee their society. See Arg. [c].

11. *If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blond, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause.*

11. They may represent perhaps what advantage it will be to thee, to join with them in the breach of

the very next Commandment to that, of *honouring thy Father and thy Mother*: saying, come along with us to our lurking places, where no body can see us; and from thence set upon a wealthy Traveller, who is to go that way, and take away his life: what though he be innocent, we shall the more easily dispatch him, when he suspects no danger and hath given us no provocation.

12. *Let us swallow them up alive, as the grave, and whole, as those who go down into the pit:*

12. And though he should have many Servants or Companions with him to

defend him, let not that affright thee; for we are enough of us to kill them all with ease and in a moment, or to strangle them, and bury them alive: so that none shall escape to tell any tales; nor shall they make any noise; nay, it shall not be known what is become of them.

13. ¶

13. *We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil :*

of precious things : enough to enrich us all, and furnish our Houses bravely; that we may live splendidly all our days.

14. *Cast in thy lot among us, let us all have one purse :*

it as we, who have been longer at the trade: for we live like Friends, among whom all things are common; there is but one purse among us all, in which every one hath an equal interest.

15. *My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path.*

they will ingage thee (though the guilt of that is too horrid to venture upon) but they will be always hurrying thee to some new mischief or other: and as soon as one mischief is over, they will be ready for and make haste to commit another.

16. *For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.*

they will ingage thee (though the guilt of that is too horrid to venture upon) but they will be always hurrying thee to some new mischief or other: and as soon as one mischief is over, they will be ready for and make haste to commit another.

17. *Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.*

thee this warning: and be not so foolish and incautious as the silly Birds; who use to run into the snare or the net, which they see the Fowler lay before their eyes, (VII. 23.)

18. *And they lay wait for their own blood, they lurk privily for their own lives.*

13. The booty shall be great; for we are sure to find vast treasures, and all manner

14. Come in for a share of it; and thou shalt have as much of

15. But, My Son (or whoever thou art that wilt learn of me) let them not pre-

16. For it is not one single murder (or robbery) in which

17. Flee from their society therefore, now that I have given

18. For as he doth not lay his net in vain, but they are caught therein, so assure thy

thy self these men are setting a trap for themselves, when they lie in wait to take away the lives of others: for they shall not always escape the hand of Justice; but at last be taken and suffer, either by a special vengeance of God, or by his Ministers, what they have deserved.

19. *So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain: which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.*

the Bird inticed by a little chaff falls into a snare, which it doth not perceive; so he on a sudden loses his life, to satisfy a vain desire of worldly pelf, which then he cannot enjoy.

20. ¶ *Wisdom crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets.*

manifold instructions of Wisdom; whose most excellent counsels you cannot but be as well acquainted withall, as you are with that which is proclaimed in the open streets. For you hear them in the plain dictates of your own Consciences, in the Laws of God, in the Mouth of his Prophets and Ministers, in the Admonitions and Examples of good Men, and in the Course of his Providence and wise Government; which call upon you more earnestly and loudly, than these leud Seducers, to follow and obey them.

21. *She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the opening of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying,*

self, nor lurks in darkness, like those impious Seducers, but appears openly in the midst of the greatest crowds; where no noise can drown its voice, no business, either publick or private, can thrust by its reproofs; but still it interposes it self, and every body, even those wicked Men that flee from it, hear it calling to them;

22. *How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners*

19. Such is the fate of him that greedily indeavours to enrich himself by such wicked means. As

20. ¶ Let me advise you therefore rather to hearken to the

21. There is no place where this Cry of Vertue and Piety is not heard; which is not ashamed of it

22. And representing their unaccountable folly and stupidity

delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? dity, in such unanswerable Questions as these. Is it not ap-

parent by many examples, that such men as you are deceived and abused with vain hopes? Why then do you continue the cheat? Have you not play'd the fool long enough, but you will still act against your reason and against your interest? Where lies the pleasure of scoffing at Religion and Vertue, that you will never give it over? Is any man so wise, that he needs no Monitor? Or is Ignorance so laudable, that a man should hate those who would inform him?

23. *Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.*

23. Do not turn away from such checks as these; but repent in time, and relolve to learn your duty.

It is not too late, for if you will listen to the secret rebukes of your own Consciencés, and to the open reproofs of my Prophets, and follow their directions, I will plentifully communicate my mind, and infuse the very sense of it into you; It is not hard to find, nor will I conceal any thing of it, but plainly shew you all that I require of you.

24. ¶ *Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;*

24. ¶ Which offer if you refuse, nay, go on obstinately to despise instruction, then

hear the doom which God, whose voice Wisdom is, passes upon you. Because I have pressed you often to amend, and ye would not yield to me; nay, I have been very urgent and earnest with you (offering you my assistance, heaping upon you many benefits, and when they would doe no good, laying on corrections, as well as shewing you the way to happiness) and none of you would so much as attend unto me:

25. *But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:*

25. But, quite contrary, set at naught all the good advices I gave you, as if they had been but vain and idle words; and slighted all my

my reproofs and threatnings, as if they had been ridiculous, or of no moment.

26. *I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh;*

of you, in the day of your calamity (which like a dismal Cloud I will bring upon you unavoidably) I will be utterly unconcerned, when you know not which way to turn your selves; but are become the scorn of those, who shall see you quake and tremble at that, which before you would not fear at all.

27. *When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.*

you; but I will let it sweep you and all you have away like a whirlwind: and when you fall into the most pinching outward distresses, and into the sorest anguish of mind, you shall evidently see, it was my pleasure to reduce you to those inextricable straits and pressures.

28. *Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:*

will be very hard for these men not to think of me, whom before they would not regard: nay, they shall cry to me for help, but I will send them none; they shall seek my favour importunately, but without the least success.

29. *For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD.*

forced to be desirous: and when they were earnestly solicited to have some regard to God and to Religion, they would not consent unto it.

30. *They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof:*

30. But (as was said before) rejected my good Advice with such

26. Therefore I will repay you in your kind; and as little regard what becomes

27. Tho' it prove such a dreadful calamity, as will lay all waste, it shall not move me to relieve

28. For then (hearken all you that have not yet sinned to this degree of obstinacy) it

29. Because, when time was, they hated that knowledge, of which now they are

30. But (as was said before) rejected my good Advice with such

such disdain, as if it had been a grievance to them; and slighted, nay contemned all those Reproofs, whereby I would have reclaimed them from their Impiety.

31. *Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.*

31. Therefore, as it is just that men should reap what they sow, and eat such

Fruit as they plant, so these men shall suffer the punishments, which their wicked doings naturally produce: nay, be glutted and surfeited with the miserable effects of their own counsels and contrivances.

32. *For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.*

32. For let them alone and they need no body but themselves to destroy

them: their escaping dangers, onely making them more audacious to run into them; and their receiving daily additions of riches and honours, supplying their folly with means to hasten their undoing.

33. *But whofo hearkeneth unto me, shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.*

33. Such a vast difference there is between wicked and vertuous Men. For

whofo follows my Counsels, and takes the courses to which I direct him, shall even then be safe, and possess what he hath in peace, when he sees these Fools come to ruin: Nay, he shall not be so much as disturbed with the fear of any mischief; but rest secure of a watchfull Providence over him.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

The attention of those that reade this Book being bespoke in the foregoing Chapter, He perswades them not onely to reade but to receive and obey these good Counsels; by representing the benefits of being wise, that is, good and vertuous: and the mischiefs a man shall thereby avoid. The chief is, that he is sure to be under the guidance

dance and blessing of God; who will impart more and of more himself to those that study Wisdom; which is the scope of the former part of this Chapter: and as on the contrary, if he do not order his ways by the rules of Wisdom he is sure to wander most dangerously, so if he keep close to them they will preserve him from utter ruin; which is the design of the latter part of it. Where under the figure of an Adulterous Woman, v. 16. some think he perswades us to shun all those [a] Doctrines which draw away the mind from God; such as those of the Epicureans and Idolaters. But I take this to be intimated before v. 12. and therefore understand him literally: and then he seems to give a caution against the breach of the next Commandment to that mentioned in the first Chapter, v. 10, 11. where he charges his Son by no means to consent to join with Murtherers; and here to shun Fornication and Adultery, which alienate the mind quite from Wisdom, v. 16, 17, &c.

This therefore is one of the first things Wisdom directs us unto, and a principal benefit we receive by it; to preserve our Understandings from being corrupted, by keeping our Bodies pure and undefiled. For too many, giving up themselves to fleshly Lusts, are thereby wholly perverted, and never recover themselves: but live and die like Fools.

And one of the next points of Wisdom is, [b] to be taught by the dear bought experience of others; who have been ruined Body and Soul, by those leud Courses to which we are inticed. And here the wise Man leads us back as far as the Old World: which was wholly destroyed by such villainies as mens brutish Lusts and Passions carry them to commit. This seems to be implied in the word Rephaim, v. 18. (concerning which see Mr. Mede, p. 42.) who being abominably debauched themselves, had corrupted the rest of the World: so that there was no way left to purge it, but by extirpating the whole race of Mankind; except the Family of Noah.

In

In short, here are both Promises and Threatnings to excite us to the study of Wisdom ; together with good Directions to make our Proceedings successfull : which are principally these. First, our own diligence ; secondly, dependence upon God for help and assistance ; thirdly, a due value of that which we seek ; fourthly, avoiding such things as will plainly seduce us ; and lastly, putting in practice what we know, that we may know more : for want of which many learned Men have proved worse than the most ignorant. Most of these are the sense of the beginning of the Chapter ; and the last of them is the sense of v. 10, 11.

[c] *There are those who look upon v. 4. as a Proverbial Saying, borrowed from those that dig in Mines : the former part of it expressing eager desire and great diligence ; and the latter invincible resolution and constant perseverance, notwithstanding those difficulties that occur to discourage our labour. Both which I have taken notice of in the Paraphrase ; though I see nothing Proverbial in it, more than in many other similitudes.*

[d] *I do not know whether I need observe (it is so easy) that the phrase we meet withall v. 19. go unto her, is a modest expression ; used frequently in the holy Books : as may be seen very often in one Chapter XXXVIII. Gen. 2, 8, 9, 16, 18.*

1. **M**Y Son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee ;

tell thee for thy further encouragement ; that if thou dost entertain these Exhortations, which I have now given thee ; and keep these Precepts in remembrance, for the same end that Corn is sown and covered in the ground.

2. *So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thy heart to understanding :*

1. **A**ND now, My Son, whose happiness I most heartily desire, let me
2. *Listening with diligent attention, not to the inticements of such evil Men as I have*

have described, but to the counsels and instructions of Wisdom; with sincere affection applying thy mind to understand thy duty:

3. *Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding:*

most need; and without which they are in danger to perish: praying those that are able to inform thee; and beseeching God likewise with ardent devotion, that he would bring thee acquainted with it:

4. *If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her, as for hid treasures:*

thy esteem of it by studious seeking for it, as covetous Men do for money: laying hold upon all occasions of profiting in knowledge, and pursuing thy advantages (as they do) when thou meetest with them; not giving over thy labour presently, if thou findest not what thou desirest; but enquiring still, and sparing no pains to know what the will of the Lord is: See Arg. [c]

5. *Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD; and find the knowledge of God.*

there is no Wisdom comparable to it: and shalt find also what reason there is to reverence, worship and solicitously obey Him, who is the Almighty Creator, Governour, and judge of all the World.

6. *For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.*

(without whom all our pains and study about it will be ineffectual) so there is no doubt He will bestow it on those who esteem it above all worldly goods; especially this most necessary part of it: which He hath already imparted to us by his Prophets and Men inspired; who have given us a true knowledge and understanding of Him.

3. And moreover, if thou exprestest such a desire of it, as men do of that which they

4. If thou dost value this Wisdom above the greatest Treasures, and shew

5. Then thou shalt not fail to understand what it is to be truly religious; and that

6. For as Wisdom, no less than all other good things is the gift of the Lord

7. *He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.*

7. And have assured us, that he hath solid and durable Blessings (transcend-

ing all the transitory things of this life) reserved in store for upright Men: and will protect all those by his almighty Providence, whose care it is to perform and complete obedience to Him in all things.

8. *He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.*

8. That so he may preserve them in their integrity; and encourage them neither to

swerve from the rules of Justice, nor to cease to exercise Mercy and Kindness: For he hath a great favour to such pious Persons; and will be their keeper and defender in such proceedings.

9. *Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.*

9. By which thou shalt understand that Justice and Mercy in thy private dealings,

and faithfull discharge of thy trust in all publick Offices, and uprightness in every other Vertue; are all of them the best, the most plain, easy, and natural way a man can take to be happy.

10. ¶ *When wisdom entreth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;*

10. ¶ And when Wisdom hath thus taken possession of thy very heart and af-

fections; and thou findest an inward pleasure and satisfaction, by observing the rules of Piety and all manner of Vertue.

11. *Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:*

11. This alone will be a sufficient security to thee, and make

thee unwilling to depart from them. For thy own experience will teach thee that it is the greatest cunning to go in those plain and open ways; and that no men understand their own interest so well, as they that cannot be perswaded by any means to forsake them.

12. *To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things.*

this will deliver thee from that danger; and not suffer thee to be perverted by the mouth of him, that would subtilly insinuate his leud Principles into thee.

13. *Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darknes:*

cover their folly; in leaving the straight, plain and even paths of Vertue, to walk blindly they know not whither in the perplexed ways of Vice and Wickedness.

14. *Who rejoyce to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked.*

no higher pleasure than to pervert others, and make them as bad as themselves:

15. *Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths.*

cate ways, directly cross to their own interest, safety, and pleasure; for the whole course of their life is nothing else, but a shamefull contradiction to their soberest Reason and best Understanding.

16. *To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words:*

nate love of true Wisdom, that it will deliver thee, not onely from the snares of wicked Men; but, which is more dangerous, of a naughty Woman: whose company (though so pernicious that God would have thee perfectly estranged from her, as if she were not of the Commonwealth of Israel, yet) hath powerfull charms in it, to flatter thee into her embraces. See Argument [a]

12. Though other-wise thou mightest be seduced into a wrong course, yet

13. Though thou shouldest be assaulted by many of them, thou shalt easily dis-

14. Being so mad as to rejoyce when they have done any mischief; and having

15. That is to draw them aside, and intangle them in intri-

16. But such is that sweet satisfaction which (as I said v. 10, 11.) thou wilt find in the affection-

17. *Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God.*

Husband (though a worthy and perhaps noble Person) to whom she was joyned in her youth, when love is in its greatest warmth, and took him for her Guide and Governor: but hath wickedly broken the Laws of God, and violated the solemn vow of fidelity to him, which she made when they were married.

18. *For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead.*

avoid her Society; who loves no body, now that she hath forsaken him that had her first affection; but seeks the ruin of all that go to her House: where, by one means or other, they are in danger to meet with their Grave, and be sent to keep company with those old Gyaunts, who corrupted Mankind with such filthiness and violence, that they brought a deluge upon the Earth. (VI. *Gen.* 4, 5, 11.) See Arg. [b]

19. *None that go unto her, return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.*

drawn into her impure embraces, ever gets out again: but she holds them all so fast by her enchantments, and they are so blinded and bewildred by her arts; that, like Men who have quite lost their way in a strange Country, they seldom or never can hit into it, and recover themselves, to a virtuous way of living. See Argument [d].

20. *That thou mayst walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous.*

that escaping her snares, as well as those of wicked Men, thou mayst imitate those excellent Persons the Patriarchs and Prophets; and be preserved in the paths of those righteous Men who followed after them.

17. Above all other, from that filthy Adulteress, who is so leud as to leave her

18. The least degree of that discretion which Wisdom infuses, will teach thee to

19. And this is very remarkable, that it is rarely seen that any body who is

20. In which the sincere love of Wisdom (*v.* 11, 12, &c.) will so secure thee;

21. *For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.*

men of integrity (according to God's promise XI. *Deut.* 8, 9, 21.) shall peaceably enjoy this good Land which God hath given us; and they that study sincerely to please Him in all things, shall leave it in possession to their Posterity after them.

22. *But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.*

22. But such impious Men, as I spoke of (according to what God himself hath also denounced XI. *Deut.* 17. and other places) shall be cut down from the Earth; where they may flourish, like a Tree, for a time: nay, they that give themselves up to do wickedly, and keep no faith with God nor Man shall be pluckt up, like a Tree, by the very roots, and leave none to preserve their memory behind them.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

In this Chapter he continues to press obedience to the precepts of Wisdom; from the consideration of the Benefits that are to be reaped thereby. Which he began to speak of in the foregoing Chapter (touching also there upon the mischiefs on the contrary side) but here handles more largely; and explains it not only in general but in several particular Precepts: for instance, liberality to God's Ministers, v. 9, 10. patience in adversity, v. 11, 12. the foundation of which is an intire trust in God, and his Fidelity, who will honour those that honour Him, in his Ministers; and never desert those in their trouble, who do good when they are in their prosperity, v. 5, 6.

After

After these things he returns to the general Exhortation; v. 13, &c. advising every one to learn the Doctrine delivered by God, and to be obedient; and not to be so foolish, as to prefer their own wisdom or craft before it. To which he adds Promises, and Comminations; together with several Advices; which I need not note particularly, because they lie plainly before their eyes who will read the Chapter.

I shall only observe that he represents Wisdom [a] (v. 16, 17, &c.) that is, Religion and Vertue as other Authors have done (particularly Cebes in his Tables) in the shape of a beautifull Woman, or rather Queen; with her Arms extended, in the posture not only of directing, but also of rewarding her Lovers and Followers. For she holds forth in her Right hand the great blessings of Health, and length of days, unto all those that will walk in the way to which she points. And it was but just to place this in her Right hand, that is, to give it the precedence; because it was the chief promise of the Law; and indeed the most desirable of all earthly Blessings, without which nothing can be enjoyed; no not our selves.

And then, after this, follow Wealth and Reputation; things that Mankind mightily covet; which he places in her Left hand; as inferiour Blessings, but that come also from her gift.

And as for chearfulness in all conditions, there are no Pleasures he affirms like those, which wait upon her, and attend her motions. Safe and secure Pleasures; which do not merely gratify us for the present, and then expose us to danger and leave us sad afterward: but give us a peaceable possession of perpetual joy; which never dies nor decays; but, like the Tree of Life, remains fresh for ever. This he proves v. 19, 20. and amplifies in the rest of the Chapter.

[b] In which some observe three *Proverbial Sayings*:

One v. 8. which seems to be but a *metaphorical representation*

sentation of that firmness, that vigorous health, and cheerfulness of mind, which Vertue imparts : the other in v. 12. [c] whom the Lord loveth he correcteth ; which Theodoret upon XII. Heb. 6. calls indeed *πατρι-
μική παγγίσις*, a Proverbial Admonition, belonging to such Parents, Guardians and Masters, as are carefull of those committed to their charge : but he names it so, I suppose, only because he found it in the Book of the Proverbs. The last in v. 18. [d] Tree of Life : which seems to be a Proverbial Speech (used afterward more than once in this Book) for that which prolongs Life ; and makes it very delightfull and pleasant, as well as firm and durable : If we understand it of Christ, the wisdom of God (as Origen, St. Ambrose, St. Austin and others do) or of his Doctrine, which is the same : it is literally true that He gives Immortality, as the Tree of Life in Paradise would have done.

1. **M**Y son, forget not my Law ;
but let thine heart keep
my commandments.

learn of me (who loveth thee with a Fatherly affection) not to be careless and negligent in the observance of these Instructions : but remember them, and love them, and set thy self heartily to doe whatsoever I command thee.

2. For length of days, and long
life, and peace shall they add to
thee.

to attain : a long life, in firm health, vigour, and strength ; with all manner of happiness and prosperity, XXX. *Dent.* 18, 20.

3. Let not mercy and truth for-
sake thee : bind them about thy
neck, write them upon the table
of thine heart.

God, and his faithfulness to his Promises will secure these Blessings to thee : therefore let my Commandments be ever
before

1. **L**ET me then a-
gain intreat
thee, whoever thou
art that comest to

2. For this is the
surest way to that
which all men natu-
rally desire, and seek

3. Of this thou
canst not miss, if thou
wilt be stedfastly
good and just ; for
the infinite bounty of

before thine eyes; fix them in thy Memory, and in thy Affections, as if they were ingraven upon thy Heart; and look upon it as the greatest ornament to be obedient to them.

4. *So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.*

understand, on all occasions, what is good for thy self, ordering all thy affairs with such judgment and prudence, as to be in high esteem with Him and with Men.

5. ¶ *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thy own understanding.*

and to depend wholly on his Providence, for good success in well-doing: not imagining that by thy own wit and policy, thou canst contrive such events as thou desirest, and bring about what thou designest.

6. *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

be sensible of his over-ruling Power; observe his Laws; and implore his favour and blessing: and He shall guide thee in thy proceedings; and bring them to an happy issue, as He in his Wisdom sees best for thee.

7. ¶ *Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.*

thou canst manage things thereby in thine own way (neglecting the Rules that He hath prescribed thee) to thy satisfaction: but have a religious regard to Him, who can either disappoint or prosper thee, as he pleases; and, fearing to offend his Majesty, avoid most cautiously those practices that He hath forbidden thee.

8. *It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.*

Body: and in all conditions to remain undejected; nay, cheerfull and fully satisfied, whatsoever happens. See Arg. [b]

4. Which is as much, as if I had bidden thee acquire favour with God; and

5. ¶ And assure thy self there is no rule of prudence like to this, to confide in God in-

6. No, in all thy undertakings both private and publick,

7. ¶ Never be guilty of such folly, as to conceit thine own wit to be so great, that

8. This is the way to preserve a good habit both of Soul and

9. Honor

9. Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase.

though it be by robbing God Himself: But, if thou wilt be truly wise and happy, honour Him in his Ministers, by paying them their *tithes* duly; and bringing *oblations* to his house at the *three* solemn Feasts; (XXIII. *Exod.* 14, 15.) together with the *first-fruits* of all that thy Estate produces (XXII. *Exod.* 29, 30.) in token of thy gratitude to Him, and that all thou hast is his, and cannot thrive without his Blessing.

10. So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

the Earth with Fruit, and sending a seasonable as well as plentiful Harvest and Vintage, that this is the way, not to diminish, but to encrease the Estate which God hath given thee. XXVIII. *Deut.* 4, 5. 2 *Chron.* XXXI. 10.

11. ¶ My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD: neither be weary of his correction.

(v. 1.) let not that dissatisfy thee; nor make thee, either doubt of his gracious Providence over thee, or out of impatience take any unlawfull course to remove it from thee.

12. For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son, in whom he delighteth.

hurt thee; but only correct something that is amiss in thee: For we are sure He loves those that keep his Commandments; and therefore nothing that proceeds from his love ought to be despised; or received with an abject mind; but duly esteemed by them, and raise their expectation of some good from the affliction; which should no more make Him suspected of any unkindness, than a tender Parent is, when he whips the Child in whom he delights; and to whom he wishes so well, that he will not let him be unchastised. See Arg. [c]

9. As for example, there are those who think it prudence to save all they can;

10. Which He will pour upon thee abundantly; and convince thee, by lading

11. ¶ And suppose it be his pleasure that any affliction should befall thee; My Son,

12. But rather submit unto it, as a part of his Fatherly Discipline, which cannot

13. ¶ Happy

13. ¶ *Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.*

this degree of wisdom; and acquires (though it cost him the greatest pains and labour) such an understanding of God and belief of his Providence, as, notwithstanding any troubles that befall him, still to adhere unto Him in faithfull obedience, (v. 7.)

14. *For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.*

nitely to be preferred, before all the advantages that can be made by silver and gold.

15. *She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her.*

our Wishes, that is worthy to come in competition with it.

16. *Length of days is in her right hand: and in her left hand riches and honour.*

in the first place such prudence and moderation, as by the Divine Blessing prolong our days (which none of those things can do for us) and in the next place, adds both riches and honour; which men foolishly and vainly seek to get and to keep by other means. See Arg. [4]

17. *Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.*

all the acts of Vertue to which Wisdom directs her Followers: who are always, either in perfect safety by well-doing; or, if any trouble come upon them, have that inward tranquility and satisfaction, which nothing else could give them.

13. ¶ Happy, more happy than can be expressed, is that man, who attains to

(though it cost him the greatest pains and labour) such an understanding of God and belief of his Providence, as, notwithstanding any troubles that befall him, still to adhere unto Him in faithfull obedience, (v. 7.)

14. If it were to be bought for money, one would purchase it at any rate: for the profit of it is infinitely to be preferred, before all the advantages that can be made by silver and gold.

15. The most precious Pearls are not so valuable: nor can our boundless Fancy present any thing to

16. For true Wisdom presents us, as we say, with both hands: teaching us

17. And besides all this, there is a singular pleasure, nay the highest delight, in

18. *She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her; and happy is every one that retaineth her.*

18. In short, Wisdom leads into a Paradise; and supplies the place of that Tree

of Life, from whence our first Parents were banished: that is, gives not only a present, but an immortal satisfaction, to all those that strongly apprehend and retain her Precepts; and therefore I again pronounce him happy (v. 13.) above all other men, and above all expression; who constantly and firmly adheres unto them. See Argument [d]

19. *The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.*

19. For they are a participation of that wonderfull Wisdom and Understanding, whereby the

Lord settled the Earth, in that place where it remains fixed; and disposed the heavenly Bodies in that admirable and unchangeable order, which He would have us imitate.

20. *By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.*

20. In works of mercy and goodness especially: whereby we plainly commu-

nicate with Him in that knowledge, by which the Lord made fountains of water gush out of the Earth, for the use of all living Creatures; and the Clouds drop down plentifully their refreshing dews, for the cherishing of Plants and grass, which in hot Countries many times have no other moisture.

21. ¶ *My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion.*

21. ¶ My Son (to whom my affection is so great that I cannot but again repeat

it, v. 1. 11.) let me prevail with thee to fix these good instructions in thy mind: look upon them as the most solid Wisdom, and the greatest cunning and policy; and accordingly observe them.

22. *So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck.*

22. For they will revive and cheer thee, when other things fail

thee: and inable thee also with acceptable words to comfort

fort those, whom the fame of thy Wisdom shall invite to learn of thee.

22. *Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.*

cheerfully ; because thou art sure of God's Providence over thee: and wisdom will direct thee to avoid those stumbling blocks, by which others fall into sin and danger.

24. *When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid : yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.*

what may happen, whilst thou art asleep ; but (having nothing within to discompose thee) shalt lie down securely, and, by a sound and sweet repose, be refreshed to return to thy employments.

25. *Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked when it cometh.*

unexpected and approaching danger, let not that disturb thee: no, though thou shouldst see the Wicked ready to lay all waste, or the Divine Vengeance bringing utter desolation upon them for their wickedness.

26. *For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.*

tottering condition: nay, when thy skill quite fails thee, and thou knowest not what to do for thy safety; He shall so direct and guide thee, that thou shalt be preserved from falling into the hands of those that lie in wait to destroy thee.

27. ¶ *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.*

such a time, not to be conscious to thy self of any wrong done to thy Neighbour, by denying to pay thy just debts

23. When thou goest abroad about thy business thou shalt dispatch it the more

24. And when thou comest home to rest from thy labours, thou shalt not be troubled with fear of

25. In which, if thou shouldst be interrupted by any rumours and reports of

26. For a firm hope in the Lord shall be thy support, even when thou art in a

27. ¶ And, as it will give thee great security of mind and confidence in God at

debts, when thou art able; so the remembrance of having done good to others will be a far greater: and therefore let me advise thee. to take a special care, not to withhold relief from those, whose needs intitle them unto it; when thou canst not pretend disability, but hast wherewithall to do it.

28. *Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.*

so do not thou put off thy Neighbour, when he begs a kindness of thee, saying; I cannot now; come another time; to morrow thou shalt see what I will do for thee: when if thou hadst a heart to it, thou couldst supply him now, as well as then; and who can tell what shall be to morrow?

29. *Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee.*

hath of thy honesty and goodness, tempt thee to contrive any mischief to him: for the more securely he relies on thy vertue, and the less mistrust he hath of any harm from thee, the greater wickedness it will be, so much as to have, it in thy thoughts to do him any injury.

30. ¶ *Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.*

him with causeless or unnecessary Suits at Law: no, nor so much as pretend a cause for quarrelling and falling out with him, when he hath done nothing to deserve it of thee.

31. ¶ *Envy thou not the oppressor, and chuse none of his ways.*

oppression and violence, let not that provokes thee to emulate them; that is, to wish thy self in their condition, by imitating them in any of their injurious proceedings.

28. And, as thou wouldest not have God to deferr his help, in such distresses as I spake of (v. 25, 26.)

29. And let not the quietness of any Man's temper, much less the confidence he

30. ¶ For instance, do not bring false Actions against any Neighbour, nor vex

31. ¶ And what though thou shouldst see men thrive by

32. *For the froward is abomination to the LORD: but his secret is with the righteous.*

above all expression abominable to the Lord; even in his highest prosperity: but the Lord is a Friend to men of sincere integrity; who know the secret of his Providence in raising those wicked Oppressours so high, that they may have the more dreadfull fall.

33. ¶ *The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked: but he bleisseth the habitation of the just.*

stately Palace: but just and good men ought to look upon themselves as under his care and blessing; and therefore very happy in the meanest Cottage.

34. ¶ *Surely he scorneth the scorers: but he giveth grace to the lowly.*

not onely confound, but expose to scorn, and make them ridiculous in the eyes of the World: but cause the humble, modest and meek (who bare even their insolent scoffs patiently) to be had in honour and highly esteemed.

35. *The wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the promotion of fools.*

accounted the onely wise Men; and leave an excellent never-dying fame behind them: when those impious Men shall be famous for nothing, but the shame and disgrace that shall fall upon them.

32. For he that perversely departs from all the rules of truth and justice, is

33. ¶ The evil doer is under the curse of the Lord, though he live in the most

34. ¶ Those proud Oppressours and Scoffers at good Men, he will undoubtedly,

35. They may be despised and debased for a time, but in the issue they shall be ac-

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

The dulness, sluggishness and forgetfulness of Mankind in their principal concernments, are so notorious, that we need

need not wonder the Wise Man repeats the very same things, and quickens our attention to them, in the beginning of this Chapter. Which he thought necessary to excite again (v. 10.) and again (v. 20.) because all his pains, he knew, would be lost without serious consideration of what he said: and the very first step to Wisdom, is to have a mind to be wise.

And to make his Exhortations the more acceptable, he acquaints the Reader with the Lessons which his own Father and Mother were wont to teach him (v. 3, 4, &c.) and the great benefit he had received by them. Which gave him the greater confidence to press every one to follow his example of obsequiousness to good counsels, as the surest way to be happy: and by no means to imitate the examples of the wicked, from which he dissuades by many arguments (v. 14, 15, &c.) and beseeches they may be so duly pondered (v. 20, 21, &c.) that they produce in every one a watchfulness over his heart, his mouth, his eyes, his feet; as may be seen in the conclusion of the Chapter.

The whole Chapter from v. 4. may be conceived to be the words of David as well as Solomon's. But I have extended David's advice no further than unto v. 10. and there make Solomon to resume his exhortation; and urge upon his Son what his Father had taught him.

There is one Proverbial speech in v. 27. which needs no explication. Some would have another, v. 16. but I can see no reason for it.

The Principal Instructions in this Chapter are these. The care that Parents ought to take, to instruct their Children diligently: and the greater they are (suppose Princes) the more accurate ought their Education to be, as Solomon's was, v. 3, 4, &c. And above all things the excellence of Wisdom and Vertue is to be inculcated: for this excites a desire of it; and that's the very beginning of it, as some expound those words, v. 7. In which sense they are admirably explained in the Book

of Wisdom, VI. 12, 13, 14, 17. *Next to this they are to be cautioned against evil Company, as the bane of Youth: and the wretchedness of their life that live wickedly is to be represented; and the happiness, comfort and satisfaction of theirs that live virtuously, which increases as their days and their virtues do, v. 18. Next they are to be taught how necessary it is to be constant in reading pious Books, especially the holy Scriptures, v. 21. And to have an upright heart, sincerely disposed to follow such directions; upon which all depends, both their well or ill doing, and their well or ill being. Watchfulness also over the Senses is commended, as of great use to preserve the Affections from being corrupted.*

1. **H**ear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

out of a paternal affection, I bring from God unto you: hearken to them, though they correct your present manners; and let your mind be so attentive, that you may know what it is to have a right understanding in all things.

2. For I give you good doctrine, forsake you not my law.

teach you; but the most excellent things, and absolutely necessary to your happiness: therefore do not merely attend to them, but strictly observe my Precepts, as the Law and Rule of your life.

3. For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.

a most wise and pious Father, and under the carefull eye of an affectionate Mother; who loved me most dearly above all her Children, and while I was soft and flexible, and apt to receive good impressions, lookt to my education with great circumspection;

1. **L**isten then all ye that are desirous to learn, unto the Instructions which,

2. They are no frivolous or indifferent matters which I

3. Do as I my self did, who remember, that, when I was a Child, the Son of a

4. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments and live.

words, and faithfully retain them, not onely in thy memory, but in thy affections: observe my Commandments, and thou shalt enjoy long happiness.

5. Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not, neither decline from the words of my mouth.

dom; and endeavour to understand how to behave thy self upon all occasions; and when thou art well informed in thy duty, do not forget it, nor turn aside from the way, into which I will direct thee.

6. Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.

stick to them, and they will preserve thee from innumerable mischiefs; love them sincerely, and they will be a stronger guard than money can procure thee.

7. Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

know as much, and to prize it accordingly. Begin therefore to be wise, by looking upon the fear of God as above all earthly Possessions, and by being willing, if it were needfull, to give all thou art worth to know what is pleasing to him.

8. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour when thou dost embrace her.

find by happy experience. For if thou magnify it, above all things, it will raise thy esteem and make thee great in the World; yea, when thou entertainest it with ardent love, thou shalt become most illustrious in the sight of God and Men.

4. My Father was wont to tutor and instruct me (1 Chron. XXVIII. 8. XXIX. 2.) saying, Mind my

5. And this is the thing I require of thee, not so much to seek after Riches, as to treasure up Wis-

6. Quit all things in this World rather than forsake the Precepts of Wisdom;

7. And as there is nothing comparable to Wisdom, so the first step to it is to

8. Thou canst not speak nor think too highly of this Wisdom, as thou shalt

9. She

9. *She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.*

9. Whatsoever else thou hast to commend thee and gain thee honour, this shall

add unto it, and make it far more amiable: the fairest ornaments or the most beautifull Crown that can be set upon thy head, shall receive lustre from hence; and be settled there the more securely.

10. *Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings: and the years of thy life shall be many.*

10. Thus my Father was wont to discourse to me, as I do to thee, My Son;

whom I earnestly again intreat (v.1.) to consider what I say; and to believe it; and then I promise thee, what he did me (v.4.) that thou shalt lead a long and happy life.

11. *I have taught thee in the way of wisdom: I have led thee in right paths.*

11. I have already taught thee, and will still inform thee in the wisest course un-

to it; not in those crooked ways of fraud and falseness, &c. which many take; but in the directest paths of integrity and truth, in which I intend, as I have done hitherto, to lead thee.

12. *When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitned, and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.*

12. And if thy actions and designs have no other rule, thou shalt be at ease, and

free from those straits and difficulties which others meet withall: and in case thy business shall require haste, this will be the safest, as well as the most inoffensive (if not the shortest) way to accomplish thy ends.

13. *Take fast hold of instruction, let her not go; keep her, for she is thy life.*

13. Resolve to try it, and, though it should be contrary to thy present sense,

yet do not refuse this Instruction which I give thee; but take such fast hold of it, as never for want of care and pains, to let it slip out of thy mind; keep it as a most precious treasure, for all thy happiness depends upon it.

14. ¶ *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.*

gave thee in the beginning (*ch. 1. 10.*) not so much as to enter upon their wicked course of life, or to keep them company, who regard not God, and are injurious to Men: or if thou hast been seduced into it, be not perswaded by their seeming prosperity and thriving condition to continue in it.

15. *Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.*

near it, but get as far as thou canst from their Society: and decline all occasions that might invite thee into it, as dangerous temptations.

16. *For they sleep not except they have done mischief: and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.*

among them, for instance, that cannot be quiet, nor have any satisfaction, till they have executed their villainous intentions; but perpetually disturb themselves, that they may ruine others.

17. *For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence:*

is the fruit of their rapine and violence, and not of their honest labours.

18. *But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

life is full of honour as well as joy: which increases continually together with their vertue; proceeding (like the splendour of the Sun, which nothing can extinguish, nor hinder in its course) till it come to the highest pitch of joy and glory.

14. ¶ And if thou really intendest to be guided by me, remember the advice I

15. Avoid it therefore with a just abhorrence; come not

16. For as mischief is their business, so they pursue it with a restless diligence: there being those a-

17. For they live by robbery and spoil; having no other meat and drink, but what

18. Which makes a wide difference between them and righteous Men; whose pure and innocent

19. *The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.*

vilely; going on blindly to their own destruction (of which they are in constant danger, and grows more and more upon them) and yet they know not (no more than men in thick darkness) what mischief it is that suddenly may befall them.

20. ¶ *My son, attend to my words, incline thine ear unto my sayings.*

(v. 1, 10.) that thou wilt give diligent heed to my advice; and seriously consider those exhortations, which proceed from a sincere affection to thy welfare.

21. *Let them not depart from thine eyes: keep them in the midst of thine heart.*

rather preserve them studiously, and lay them up, as a most precious treasure, in the closest affections of thy heart.

22. *For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.*

come thoroughly acquainted with them: and, how various soever their temper and condition be, will prove an universal remedy for all their griefs and troubles.

23. ¶ *Keep thy heart with all diligence: for out of it are the issues of life.*

guard upon the inward thoughts, motions and affections of thy soul (which are besieged with many enemies) that thy consent be never obtained to any thing, which thou oughtest to refuse: for thy living well or ill depends on this; and such as thy caution and watchfulness is in this, such will the actions of thy life be, which flow from thence.

19. Whereas those wicked People live most uncomfortably, as well as basely and

20. ¶ Therefore I do not without reason once more repeat my request unto thee

21. Reade them over and over again, and keep them perpetually in mind; or rather

22. For they will make all those exceeding happy, both in body and soul, that

23. ¶ And charge thy self with this, above all other cares, to set such a strict

24. *Put away from thee a forward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.*

the Gates and Posterns, so do thou upon thy Ears and upon thy mouth, never speaking things contrary to Truth, Honesty, and Religion thy self; nor listning unto those that do, but banishing both, as far as is possible, from thy familiarity.

25. *Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eye-lids look streight before thee.*

well that they do not gaze about, and fasten on every object that invites them: but be fixed upon one scope, as thy thoughts ought to be, from which let nothing divert them.

26. *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.*

it thoroughly, whether it be agreeable to the rule of life, and the end thou aimest at: and so thou shalt be constant to thy self, and confirmed in a stedfast course of well doing.

27. *Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.*

on the one hand, or to contempt or neglect of Religion on the other: let neither love of Friends nor hatred of Enemies, neither hope of pleasure and gain, nor fear of pain and damage, neither prosperous nor cross events, ever move thee to turn into either extremes from the rule of vertue: but, whatsoever inclination thou findest that way, do not proceed to commit the least sin against God or against thy Neighbour.

24. And as they that defend a City against an Enemy, set a strong guard at

25. The Eyes also are dangerous inlets into the heart; and therefore watch them

26. And before thou fixest and resolvest upon any action, examine and weigh

27. From which do not suffer thy self to be drawn aside, either to superstition

C H A P. V.

A R G U M E N T.

There being nothing to which Youth is so prone, as to give up themselves to satisfy their fleshly desires, and nothing proving so pernicious to them, if they do it with Harlots; the Wise Man gives a new caution against those impure Lusts, which he had taken notice of before (ch. II. 16, 17, &c.) as great obstructions to Wisdom: and with repeated intreaties begs attention to so weighty an argument, which here he prosecutes more largely, and presses not onely with singular elegance, but with powerfull reasons. Which in the heat of youth men are not forward to consider; but if they would be so sober, Solomon hath said enough to deter them from whoredom.

Whose miserable effects he describes by several apt resemblances (v. 4, 5.) which shew how, by this vice, men lose their honour, their time, their health, and estates; and at last (as he shews afterwards) lie down in sorrow, and end their days in an unprofitable repentance. And therefore, for the prevention of this, he commends the use of marriage, and a passionate love for a man's own Wife; which he describes allegorically: first, [a] under the comparison of a domestick fountain; where a man may quench his natural thirst, and from whence streams (i. e. Children) may be derived abroad to serve the publick good, &c. and secondly, under the comparison of a young Hind and a young wild Goat; which are taken notice of by Authors that write of Animals (particularly Oppianus) to be loving Creatures: and which in ancient times were play-fellows (as one may call them) for the greatest persons; who kept them in their Palaces,

and diverted themselves with them, as a lovely sort of Creature, whom they delighted to adorn with Chains and Garlands and such like things. About which Bochartus among others may be consulted: who hath demonstrated that the Jaalah (which we translate a Roe) is a Creature that lived in mountainous places, and could climb up the steepest Rocks. Unto which, as well as to a young Hind, Solomon compares a good Wife, because of the simplicity, softness, good nature of this kind of Creature; and other qualities mentioned by ancient Authors. Who abundantly satisfy us, what reason the Wise Man had to make choice of these comparisons, to represent the pleasures of ardent love between Man and Wife; when it is natural, without constraint; sincere, simple, gentle, without moroseness, suspicions, or pride: which good qualities are not to be found in Harlots; but may be met withall in a Wife. From whence he shews the unreasonableness, nay unaccountable folly of preferring fornication and vagrant lusts, before the innocent joys of a married life (v. 20.) to which a man, who considers his own good, would chuse to be tied that he may avoid the inconveniencies or rather miseries to which the lusts of uncleanness reduce him: but especially the heavy judgment of God; who having ordained marriage for the comfort of Mankind and the preserving society (v. 21, &c.) will not therefore let the contempt of it go unpunished.

The principal things to be learnt in this Chapter are; not to believe every thing to be good for us, that pleases the flesh for the present, v. 3, &c. but in the beginning of any pleasure, to look to the end of it; to avoid the company of Harlots: to use due care in the choice of a Wife: to love her too much, rather than too little; to restrain our selves from inordinate affection, by the consideration of God's omnipresence, &c.

The Proverbial Sayings are obvious enough, in v. 3, 4, 15. I shall onely give an account of my translating עדה v. 14. [b] the Assembly of Judges: for in many other places, besides those quoted there in the Paraphrase, it signifies the LXX. Elders or Senators who judged the People: as in the XX. Josh. 6. and XXVII Numb. 21. where R. Solomon thus expounds כל העדה all the Congregation. And so truly it seems plainly to be used XV. Numb. 24, &c. where the Sacrifice is different from that prescribed in IV. Levit. 13, &c. and therefore the sin was different and the Congregation for whom this was offered, were the Representatives of the whole Congregation; or, as they now speak, the great Sanhedrin.

1. **M**Y son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding.

1. **I** Cannot too often awaken thine attention (whoever thou art that

puttest thy self under my Instruction. See chap. II. 1. III. 1, 2, 1, &c.) especially in things of such moment as I am going to treat of: and therefore again I beseech thee, both to mind diligently, and to consider what I take to be true Wisdom, and more than ordinary Prudence.

2. *That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge.*

2. Which if thou observeest, it will make thee so skilfull and discreetly cautious,

that thou shalt not onely be able to preserve thy self from the most subtil and dangerous deceits; but upon occasion to advise others, and keep them from being cheated.

3. ¶ *For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honey-comb, and her mouth is smother than oyl.*

3. ¶ As too many are by the arts of an Harlot, from whom thou oughtest to e-

strange thy self as much as if she were not of the commonwealth of *Israel*; for she pretending the greatest love, allures inexperienced youth by her flattering speeches,

and sweet voice perhaps and songs, wherewith she enchants them; and making them believe they shall taste nothing but the most delicious pleasures, her soft and smooth inticements slip down glibly into their unwary hearts, which are taken with her.

4. *But her end is bitter as worm-wood, sharp as a two-edged sword.*

4. But the beginning of this love is not so sweet, as the conclusion is bitter; and therefore think of both together, and believe what I now tell thee without making a trial: that after a short pleasure follows long pain, by the impairing Mens health, strength, estates, and credit; which they cannot reflect upon without trouble and vexation, and (if she do not quite destroy their reason) be filled with remorse of conscience and anguish of spirit: for, like a sword that cuts on both sides, she wounds both Soul and Body.

5. *Her feet go down to death: her steps take hold on hell.*

5. In short, leads those that follow her to an untimely shamefull and miserable end: to have never so little to doe with her, is to approach to certain and inevitable destruction; not onely here, but in another World.

6. *Left thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them.*

6. For though thou mayst think to make a retreat in time, thou wilt be deceived: she having more ways than thou canst ever know (winding and turning her self into a thousand shapes) to keep thee from so much as deliberating about thy return to a vertuous course of life.

7. *Hear me now, therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.*

7. All which considered should incline those that read these things, to be obedient to me: who do not desire to restrain them from any thing that will make them happy; but in tender affection advise them, not to be inticed by her flatteries to depart from those fatherly counsels, which out of mere kindness I give unto them.

8. *Remove*

8. *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house :*

to attend unto me, wholly shun all familiarity with her ; nay, so much as the least aspect towards her : avoid her as thou wouldst the Plague ; and be so far from going into her Chamber, as not to come near the door of her House.

9. *Left thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel.*

worthy actions, and grow contemptible among thy Friends and Acquaintance ; who see thee prefer the company of Harlots, and their base Attendants, before that of the most vertuous Persons : and thereby thou lose, not onely thy fame, but sacrifice the flower of thine age, and thy precious time, to one that doth not love thee a jot ; but could see thee perish without any pity.

10. *Left strangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labours be in the house of a stranger.*

vigour of thy Body, and then thy Money and Estate upon a strange Family, perhaps of another Country : whose filthy Lusts are satiated at the expence of thy Spirits ; and whose House and Table are furnished with the fruit of thy care and labour.

11. *And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed.*

precious time, thy health, thy estate, and thy pleasure too are all gone, and nothing left but an heavy heart, and skin and bone ; then thou begin unprofitably to groan and lament ; nay, perhaps to rear out thy grief in a most deplorable manner :

12. *And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof ?*

8. If all will not be governed by them, yet do thou, whose mind is awakened

9. Left thou forfeit all the reputation, which perhaps thou hast got by

10. And that will be the issue of thy impurity ; which wastes first the strength and

11. And when things are come to this pass, that thy credit, thy friends, thy

12. Saying, How stupidly foolish have I been, in not considering all this sooner ?

er? how senselessly bent upon my own ruin? I am amazed to think how I hated the cautions that were given me to avoid her company? and inwardly despised (how civilly soever in outward show I received them) the just reproofs I had afterward for going to her.

13. *And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me?* 13. I wanted no good Instructions, my Parents, Tutours, Friends, and God's ministers; who informed me of the danger, and taught me how to escape it: but, alas! I was so sottish, as not to obey them; so contumacious, that I did not so much as consider what they said unto me.

14. *I was almost in all evil, in the midst of the congregation and assembly.* 14. But gave up myself to follow my lusts, which in a short time engaged me in almost all kind of wickedness; from which the reverence of no persons could restrain me: but openly, in the face of the most publick and solemn Assemblies of God's people; even before the Magistrates and Judges (XXV. Numb. 7. XXXV. 12.) I boldly committed them. See Arg. [b].

15. ¶ *Drink waters out of thine own cistern; and running waters out of thine own well.* 15. ¶ Such are the fruitless moans of a man, that hath quite exhausted himself in

those leud courses; which shew how much better it is to follow the advice, which I now give thee: Marry; and in a Wife of thine own enjoy the pleasures thou desirest, and be content with them alone; innocent, chaste, and pure pleasures; as much different from the other, as the clear waters of a wholesome fountain, are from those of a dirty lake or puddle.

16. *Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets.* 16. Of whom thou mayst have a lawfull Issue, which thou needest not be a-

shamed to own; but openly produce and send them abroad, like streams from a Spring, to serve the publick good; nay, a numerous progeny may be derived from your happy society, and match into divers other honest families.

17. *Let*

17. *Let them be onely thine own,
and not strangers with thee.*

17. Children that
acknowledge no o-
ther Father, because

they spring from one whom thou enjoyest (like a fountain in thy own ground) to thy self alone: being taught by thy confining thy self to her, never to admit any stranger to thy bed; but to keep it solely unto thee.

18. *Let thy fountain be blessed:
and rejoyce with the wife of thy
youth.*

18. Happy shalt
thou every way be in
such a Wife; whom
I advise thee to take

in thy youth, and avoiding those filthy, cruel Harlots (v. 9.) to solace thy self in her innocent and delightfull company: whereby thou wilt long preserve thy youth, which they speedily deflower, v. 10.

19. *Let her be as the loving hind,
and pleasant roe, let her breasts satis-
fy thee at all times, and be thour-
a-vist always with her love.*

19. Love her and
cherish her, with a
most tender affecti-
on; and let her al-
ways seem amiable in

thy eyes: if thou wouldest recreate and disport thy self (as some are wont to do with young fawns, and other beau-
tiful creatures of like kind) let it be with her, as the
sweetest companion; in whose embraces take such satisfa-
ction, us to forget all other, and to be excessively tran-
sporting with her as long as you live. See Arg. [a]

20. *And why wilt thou, my son,
be ravisht with a strange woman,
and embrace the bosom of a stranger?*

20. Consider, My
Son, (v. 1.) what I
say, and deny if thou
canst, that it is an

unaccountable folly to seek that in a vile Harlot (to whom
thou oughtest to be as great a stranger, as to her Religi-
on) which thou mayst more fully, more pleasantly, secure-
ly, and constantly, as well as more innocently, enjoy in a
pious Wife of thine own Nation.

21. *For the ways of man are be-
fore the eyes of the LORD, and
he pondereth all his goings.*

21. And, which is
most considerable,
enjoy with the ap-
probation and favour

of the Lord: from whom no man can hide his most pri-
vate

ate actions, but He plainly sees and weighs all he doth, wheresoever he be; and will exactly proportion rewards and punishments, according as he behaves himself.

22. ¶ *His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.* 22. ¶ If he be a wicked Fornicator or Adulterer, for instance, let him not

think to escape, because he is so cunning that no body observes him, or so powerfull that none can call him to account: for his own manifold iniquities shall arrest and apprehend him; and he shall need no other chains to bind and hold him fast, to answer for them to God.

23. *He shall die without instruction, and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.* 23. Whose sentence upon such a person is this; that he shall inevitably

perish, (v. 5.) because he refused to follow these Instructions; and not onely miss of his aim of being happy, but, like men that wander from the right way, precipitate himself into unexpected ruin (v. 9, 10, 11.) because he was such an egregious fool, as to take no warning by all that could be said to him; but still to commit innumerable sins (v. 13, 14.) though he was told the many inconveniencies, nay mischiefs they would bring upon him,

C H A P. VI.

A R G U M E N T.

For the securing of the peace and happiness of a married life (which the Wise Man had commended in the foregoing Chapter) he here adds two cautions; one against suretiship, the other against sloth: which make great discontentments in a Family, by bringing it to poverty. He illustrates both by elegant similitudes; especially the latter, by the example of the Ant: Who borrows of none, and yet is not in danger to starve; laying up in store, by a notable industry, sufficient provision in due season against

gainst a time of need. Which the great Lord [a] Bacon ingeniously applies (in the beginning of his Sixth Book of the Advancement of Learning) to the improvement of Arts and Sciences, by every one's bringing his grain. And in this business he defines the slothfull to be; whose onely care it is to live upon the main stock; but not to improve it by sowing the ground of Sciences over again, and reaping a new harvest. This is the sum of the eleven first verses.

And upon this occasion he annexes the description of a deceitfull knave (v. 12, &c.) who cares not by what wicked arts he lives, when he is reduced to poverty. Whose character he gives from his mouth, his eyes, feet, fingers, heart and tongue. And after a septenary of vices (v. 16, &c.) which he represents as most odious to God, he returns to his former Argument; to give cautions against uncleanness, especially Adultery (verse 20, 24, &c.) which as it is many times the effect of Idleness, so he shews is the way to bring one to poverty; nay, to indanger ones life, or to bring inevitably upon him some other mischief: not onely infamy, but the hatred and revenge of that person who is wronged by the Adulterer; who hereby puts himself into a worse condition, than that of a Thief. [b] They that would see the terrible effects of this jealousie fully and lively described, let them read Saint Chrysostom, πρὸ Παρθενίας, chap. 52. where he observes, among other things, that ἡ τὴν ἀδουμίαν νόσον, ἀλλὰ καὶ θυμὸν, &c. this Disease is wont to breed and bring forth not onely an intolerable heaviness of mind, but an insupportable rage; and that, such is the madness of this distemper, that it is not cured, no not by the revenge it takes upon him that is the cause of it.

The principal points of Wisdom to be learnt in this Chapter are these; care of our Family; caution in ingaging for others; diligence in some honest employment; hatred of idleness as contrary to nature; not to con-

temn the meanest instructor, but to learn something even of the smallest Creature ; and to improve the present time ; to dread the mischievous effects of poverty, especially that which comes by idleness : (*the effect of which is too oft the loss of all conscience, v. 12, 13, &c.*) to give good heed to the Admonitions of our Parents and Instructors, *when they teach the will of God : and above all things* to fortify our selves against the sins of uncleanness. *About which the Wise-man gives the more frequent cautions, because youth is not more prone to them, than they are pernicious to youth. Who ought therefore not only to weigh diligently the miserable consequences of them, especially of Adultery (which he represents in the conclusion of the Chapter) but carefully to avoid the occasions of such sins ; and faithfully to suppress the first motions towards them, v. 25, &c.*

[c] *Where he gives a particular charge to watch over our eyes (which are the inlets of love) and uses a remarkable phrase to express the danger of gazing upon an evil Woman ; lest he be taken or caught with her eye-lids : which he seems to compare to nets as other Authors do. Particularly Philostratus in his Epistles ; where he often speaks of the τὰ ὡς ὀμμάτων δίχτυα, nets of the eyes ; and hath in these elegant words expressed the power of love which resides in the eye-lids, here mentioned. ὁ Ἔρως τὴν ὡς ὀφθαλμῶν ἀκρόπολιν, ἢ ξύλοις, ἢ δὲ πλίνθοις, ἀλλὰ μόνοις βλεφάρῃσι τεχνίσας, ἥσυχῃ κατὰ μικρὸν εἰσδύεται, &c. Epist. Γυναικί.*

It would be too long to note the Proverbial Speeches in this Chapter. I shall only give a brief account of one of them, and of one phrase in this Chapter that needs a little explication.

[d] *As for the Proverbial Speech it is v. 11. upon which the Lord Bacon hath made a very ingenious observation ; distinguishing in this manner, between the poverty that comes as a Traveller, and the want that comes as an armed Man : that the shipwrack of fortune falls upon*

upon Prodigals or such as are careless of their Estates, by insensible degrees at the first; with soft silent paces, like a Traveller, and is hardly perceived: but soon after necessity invades him, like an armed Man: that is, presses upon him so hard, that he feels it plainly, and perceives there is no resistance to be made. *And thereupon he gives this prudent advice, to prevent the Traveller, and to be well provided against the armed Man. But it is sufficient to have noted this here, (out of his Eighth Book of the Advancement of Learning, ch. 2. parab. 5.) which they that please may make use of upon occasion. In my Paraphrase I have waved this exact curiosity: because I observe the Wise Man generally repeats the same thing in other words, without any such distinction.*

[e] *As for the phrase I spoke of, it is v. 31. where it is said a Thief shall restore sevenfold (as we translate the word) when the Law of Moses enjoyns no such restitution, but much less (XXII. Exod. 1, 4.) and there is no reason to think the Law was altered in after-times. Therefore I have followed another use of the word Schivatajim, which signifies not any determinate number; but only such as is perfect and compleat in its kind; as may be seen IV. Gen. 15, 24. XII. Psal. 7. XXX. Isa. 26.*

1. **M**R son, if thou be surety
for thy friend, if thou
hast stricken thy hand with a stran-
ger,

and Thee; be advised by me, not to pass thy word rashly
for the Money which thy Neighbour or Friend borroweth
of another: much less stand bound for a Stranger, whose
honesty or ability is unknown to thee.

2. *Thou art snared with the words
of thy mouth; thou art taken with
the words of thy mouth.*

1. **A**ND now, My
Son, (*see ch.*
II. 1. III. 1, 17.) that
no difference may a-
rise between thy Wife

2. Young men in-
deed think this no
great matter: but
if thou hast been so
incautious, as to be drawn into such ingagements, look
upon

upon thy self as no longer a free man; but hampered and enslaved in dangerous obligations.

3. *Doe this now, my son, and deliver thy self, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend: go, humble thy self, and make sure thy friend.*

be discharged, by pressing thy Friend forthwith to satisfy the debt, or to give thee security against the Creditor: Make no delay, and stick not, if need be, to cast down thy self before him on the ground, and beseech him as readily to grant thy request, as thou wast forward to comply with his: be not modest at all; nor cease to urge and importune him by thy self and by thy Friends, till thou hast prevailed with him.

4. *Give not sleep to thy eyes, nor slumber to thy eye-lids.*

wink of sleep till thou art eased of this care: which if thou understandest thy self, may well disturb thy rest.

5. *Deliver thy self as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.*

the Hunter or the snare of the Fowler: and therefore struggle, like them, with all thy might, to get loose (if it be possible) and to be released from the bond wherein thou art intangled.

6. ¶ *Go to the ant thou sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise:*

to which therefore, if thou art slothfull, I must excite thee by the example of the Ants; whose orderly and unanimous diligence, in collecting and preserving food for themselves, if thou wilt mark and observe, thou mayst be ashamed to be an idle spectator of their labours; and learn hereafter to imitate their provident care. See Arg. [A]

3. And therefore, in that case, immediately follow the counsel which I now give thee, My Son; do thy utmost endeavour to

4. Be not quiet till this be accomplished; nor take so much as a

5. For thou art in the same condition with a young Roe, or silly Bird; that is taken in the toile of

6. ¶ Nor is industry and diligence requisite in this alone, but in all thy affairs:

7. Which

7. Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,

to lead and direct them (as Mankind have) no overseer to exact their labours; no supreme Governour to call them to an account for any negligence.

8. Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.

provision against the Winter; but toil perpetually in gathering, and carrying food into the cells, they have digged for it in the Earth; where they lay it up and secure it with admirable art; that it may neither be injured by the weather, nor stolen from them by other Creatures.

9. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

nours, that call upon them again and again, and stir them up in vain to labour. What wretchedness is this, which makes thee, O sluggard, indulge thy self in laziness and sloth? as if thou wast made for nothing else, but to sleep and take thine ease?

10. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep.

and thou mayest be suffered still, without any disturbance, to enjoy a little more sleep; when thou hast loytered too long, and put off the care of thy affairs from time to time, till thou hast none left to do it in:

11. So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.

as naked, as if thou wast stript by a Highway-man: nay, extreme want seizes on thee unavoidably, like an armed Man, which thou canst find no means to resist. See Arg. [d]

7. Which is the more remarkable, because they have none

8. And yet they never omit the opportunity they have in Harvest, to make

9. O the strange idleness of Mankind! who have many Monitors and Governours

10. Rolling thy self in thy Bed, and ridiculously desiring thy pains may be spared,

11. But poverty comes apace upon thee, and before thou art aware leaves thee

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3. *Doe this now, my son, and deliver thy self, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend: go, humble thy self, and make sure thy friend.*

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11. But poverty comes apace upon thee, and before thou art aware leaves thee

12. ¶ *A naughty person, a wicked man walketh with a forward mouth.*

perfect shark, void of all faith and honesty: whose mouth never speaks a word of truth; but makes it his business by lyes, or flatteries, or slanders, or perjuries, to maintain himself in his idle courses.

13. *He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers.*

with them to his Companions, when they are to play their pranks: or if that be too broad, he secretly treads upon their Toes; or signifies his mind by the motion of his Fingers; for every part of him is imployed to make his wicked meaning understood.

14. *Frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually, he soweth discord.*

nothing but all manner of perverse inclinations; which are perpetually at work to contrive some mischief or other: and (if they can doe nothing else) by casting suspicions into mens minds one of another, to stir up hatred, dissension, strife, brawlings, law-suits, and all manner of discord; which is the destruction of Families and Kingdoms.

15. *Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.*

than he thinks of in a terrible manner come upon him: when he fancies he hath carried his matters so cunningly, that no body discerns his villainy, he shall on a suddain be lookt upon as the pest of Mankind; and, like a Vessel broken into little bits, be incurably undone.

16. ¶ *These six things doth the LORD hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto him:*

12. ¶ By which means thou mayst be tempted to become the worst of men, a

13. His very Eyes are Instruments of deceit, or mischief; for he makes signs

14. How should it be otherwise when his Heart is a Shop, furnished with no-

15. And shall prove his own utter ruin: which, for this very cause, shall sooner

16. ¶ For, among offences of this kind, nothing is more odious to the Lord (who

is the dispenser of rewards and punishments) nothing more opposite to the Divine Nature, and which He more severely punishes, than these *six* or *seven* things; which are commonly found in loose Companions, such as I have now described.

17. *A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood.*

17. *First*, pride and haughtiness of spirit; which swelling a man with a

vain opinion of himself, makes him condemn all others, and overlook them as below his notice. *Secondly*, falshood, or treachery; which stick not at any lyes, or flatteries, or calumnies. And *thirdly*, a violent, cruel disposition; which makes a man rather embroe his hands in the blood even of an innocent person, than not have him removed, who stands in the way of his designs.

18. *An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,*

18. To which add the fountain of all these, and of those that follow, a mind

that studies nothing but how by fraud or force (though never so injurious to others) to satisfy some desire of pleasure, covetousness, or revenge: which produces *three* other abominable Vices. *First*, forwardness to execute such mischievous intentions and desires cheerfully, without any check or delay.

19. *A false witness that speaketh lyes, and him that soweth discord among brethren.*

19. *Secondly*, An Atheistical impudence, which makes a man in open court

(when he is upon his oath) testify any falshood against his Neighbour; and *lastly*, such malicious envy, as loves to make the dearest Friends fall out; and takes pleasure to see those at variance, who ought to be most closely united in brotherly affection.

20. ¶ *My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother.*

20. ¶ And here, My Son, I must remember thee of what I said in the beginning (I. 8.) about a reverend regard unto thy Parents;

rents; especially when they warn thee against such wickednesses as these: do not make light of their admonitions; but observe the Precepts of thy Father, and let thy Mother's commands be a law to thee. See I. 8.

21. Bind them continually upon
thine heart, and tie them about
thy neck.

may not onely be continually before
the greatest ornament to all thy words and actions, when
they are ordered by their directions.

22. When thou goest, it shall lead
thee; when thou sleepest, it shall
keep thee; and when thou awakest,
it shall talk with thee.

in every passage of thy whole life: for when thou goest a-
bout any business, it will guide thee to do it honestly and
successfully; when thou liest down to sleep, it will make
thee rest secure of the guardianship of the Divine Provi-
dence over thee; and, when thou awakest in the morning,
suggest to thy thoughts how thou oughtest to behave thy
self at home and abroad.

23. For the commandment is a
lamp; and the law is light; and
reproofs of instruction are the way
of life:

particular Commandment of God (which they teach thee)
is like a Candle; and the whole Law is like the light of the
Sun: to shew thee thy way, and to exhilarate thy Spirits,
while thou walkest in it: nay, the severest reproofs, which
correct thy errors and reduce thee to obedience, are the
way to the greatest happiness.

24. To keep thee from the evil
woman, from the flattery of the
tongue of a strange woman.

24. As those in-
structions and re-
proofs, for instance,
ought to be account-
ed, which preserve thee from being deluded by the flattering
speeches, and inticements of a lewd Woman: from whom
thou

thou oughtest perfectly to estrange thy self, as from a sink of all wickedness.

25. *Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eye-lids.*

25. Let me advise thee again (though I have done it oft, II. 16. V. 3, 4, &c.)

not to gaze upon her beauty, or upon her fine attire; but suppress the very first desire, which a glance of her may have kindled in thy heart: do not consent to pursue it in the least; much less suffer thy self to be caught in the nets of her wanton Eyes, and thereby drawn into her dangerous embraces. See Argument [c].

26. *For by means of a whorish woman, a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.*

26. For such is the cunning of a Harlot, that having got a filly Youth into her toils, she will hardly

let him go, till she have reduced him to the extremest beggary: and if she be another Man's Wife, a train is laid for that which is more precious by far than all the treasures he hath spent, viz. his dearest life; which he foolishly loses for the short pleasure of a sinfull Lust.

27. *Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his cloathes not be burnt?*

27. He may think perhaps to enjoy his pleasure so privately, that none shall

know it; but that's as unlikely, as that a man should take fire secretly into his Bosom, and so conceal it that it shall not break out and burn his Clothes.

28. *Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burnt?*

28. Who ever heard that fire will doe no hurt, because it is

closely lodged? or that any body ever walked barefoot upon red hot Coals, and his feet escaped from being burnt?

29. *So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife: whosoever toucheth her, shall not be innocent.*

29. Even so is it sottish folly to imagine that a man shall suffer nothing, who

lies with his Neighbour's Wife: let him be who he will that commits that crime, he shall not escape unpunished.

30. Men do not despise a Thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry:

perhaps out of extreme necessity, merely to satisfy his hungry Appetite, which he knows not otherways how to fill: such an one we are apt to pity, and do not expose him to shame, by whipping him, and laying stripes upon his back;

31. But if he be found, he shall restore seven-fold, he shall give all the substance of his house.

(LXXIX. *Psalm* 12.) as the Law requires (XXII. *Exod.* 1, &c.) though that perhaps may be no less than all that he is worth. See Argument [e].

32. But who so committeth adultery with a woman, lacketh understanding: he that doeth it, destroyeth his own soul.

honest ways to satisfy his desires: and therefore hath no excuse, but must be lookt upon as a stupid Fool void of common understanding; and when he is found out be punished not merely in his estate, but with the loss of his life. XX. *Lev.* 10.

33. A wound and dishonour shall he get and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

his Reputation shall receive a deadly wound; and it will make him infamous, as long as he lives and when he is dead: for while his Name lasts it shall not be mentioned without reproach; but have a brand of disgrace set upon it, which shall never be blotted out.

34. For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

may be in the other; no Prayers neither, or Submissions shall prevail with the injured Husband: whose justly provoked indignation rises up to a furious rage; which will not

30. For he is not a common Thief, who onely steals a man's goods, and that per-

31. But when he is found out, he shall onely make as com-
pleat a restitution

32. But the Adulterer robs a Man of his Wife, without any such necessity, there being other and

33. And besides the quarrels and other troubles wherein this sin may engage him,

34. For no restitution can be made, or Satisfaction given in this case, as there

not pity or spare the Adulterer (though the publick Justice should be asleep) when he finds an opportunity to be revenged. See Arg. [b].

35. *He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.* 35. Though he may be willing to expiate his crime, and redeem his life at any

rate, it will not be accepted; the largest gifts will be refused; and though greater and greater be still offered, they will not appease his wrath: which pursues the Adulterer implacably, and never rests contented, but in his utter ruin.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Chastity is a vertue of that consequence, and Impurity such a pernicious bane of Youth; that the Wise Man thought he could not too oft make mention of the danger of the one, to move Men carefully to preserve the other. And therefore is not contented with what he had already said about this matter, in the latter end of the second Chapter, and in the whole fifth Chapter, and now in the latter part of the sixth; but again repeats it with renewed importunities; desiring to be heard attentively, especially in the cautions he gives against Adultery; the avoiding of which he represents as a high point of Wisdom, v. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And the better to secure those that desire to be happy from this snare, he represents, together with the silliness of young Men, the cunning and crafty devices of an impudent Adulteress. Which is admirably set forth from v. 6. to v. 21. Where he begins to shew the effects of her courtship, and its lamentable conclusion. And thereupon v. 24. renews his intreaties to beware of such Women; who have undone many and great persons; and to stop at the very first motion or inclination towards her.

The sum of all is, that it is a singular benefit a man hath by true Wisdom, to be preserved from such sins and such miseries: And therefore we should study Wisdom; which alone can secure us from being deceived by such flatteries, as bewitch silly and incautious Souls to their ruin. And herein the vigilance of Magistrates is required to watch and observe (as Solomon did v. 6, 7.) the manners of their Subjects; that they may the better obviate and correct their vices: but especially every man's diligent consideration is necessary, of such things as Solomon here sets before him to divert him from such wicked courses. Particularly the character of these leud women is to be studied; who are then most abominable, when they put on the mask of piety and devotion. As this strumpet doth (v. 14.) in her speech which she makes to the young Man. Where there are two things in my Paraphrase, of which I owe some account to the Reader.

- [a] *The one is in the beginning of it, v. 14. Where I have taken Schelamin peace-offerings, of which there were three sorts (VII. Lev. 11, 12, 16.) for the last of them, offerings of thanksgiving for blessings already obtained; not of prayer for the impetration of blessings from God (as Grotius and others understand the word) not yet received. My reason is, because she was so solicitous to have company at her feast upon this Sacrifice, that very day. Every body knows that such Sacrifices were to be of the best, either of Bullocks, or Sheep, or Goats (III. Lev. 1, 6, 12.) and that the greatest part of them fell to the share of the person who offered them, that he might feast with God: that is, all except the fat upon the kidneys, and rump of the Sheep, and the breast and right shoulder; which was sufficient to make a liberal entertainment for his Friends. But this is not so commonly observed, that though they might keep this flesh two days, before it was all spent, because there was such plenty of it, yet that is to be understood onely of the*

the two first sorts of Peace-offerings, for obtaining blessings; not of the eucharistical, or Thank-offerings: which as Philo observes, were to be eaten the very same day they were offered; that they who had readily received favours from God, might as readily, and without delay, communicate to others. Which is the account Abarbinel also gives of this matter: and it is observable, that all sorts of bread were to be joined with this Sacrifice, that every thing might be ready for the Feast.

- [b] *The other thing is at the latter end of her speech, v. 20, where by the word Haccése I understand the Full Moon, as the Vulgar Latin doth. With which Translation Interpreters find fault, because it looks like a contradiction, they say, to call that day by a name, which signifies the Moon to be covered: and therefore they translate it rather the New Moon, as we do in the margin of our Bibles. But they that can consult Lud. de Dieu upon LXXXI. Psal. 3. will find good reason to take it quite otherwise; for the Full Moon; which giving light then all the night, made it a fit time for a journey, either in Winter (as by the darkness of the night, v. 9. I suppose it might now be) when the days are short; or in Summer when the heat made them unfit for travel.*

The Proverbial Sayings in this Chapter, some make three, others four: all contained in two verses 22, and 23. With which I shall not trouble the Reader; because I have made them plain enough in the Paraphrase; and intend not to fill this Book with like sayings out of other Authors.

- [c] *I should onely add that Rabbim in the last verse but one, signifying great men as well as many, I have expressed both: and Solomon himself as well as Sampson became an example of the mighty men there mentioned who were undone by leud Women.*

1. **M**Y son, keep my words,
and lay up my command-
ments with thee.

I have often given thee, against this and other vices: and to beseech thee, to observe my Instructions, and to lay up my Commandments in such faithfull remembrance; that they may not fail to produce the fruit of obedience.

2. *Keep my commandments, and live: and my law as the apple of thine eye.*

thou shalt enjoy long happiness: therefore observe them carefully with a tender affection to them; and, looking upon them as thy safest guide and directour, consent as soon to wound the apple of thine Eye, as in the least to violate any of my Laws.

3. *Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.*

course to them here in this Book; but be so well acquainted with them, as to have them (as we speak) at thy fingers ends: or rather, let them be transcribed from hence; into thy very heart.

4. *Say unto Wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy Kinswoman:*

dom, that thou mayst invite it more and more unto thee: till it be as familiar with thee as an only Sister, born at the same time with thee; and thou understand and delight in all her Precepts, as so near a kin to thee, that thou find them to be the very reason and sense of thy own mind.

5. *That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words.*

1. **T**Here is great reason then, My Son, (II. Prov. 1.) to repeat the caution

2. For if thou wilt be ruled by them, assure thy self (as I have said before IV. 4.)

3. Do not merely read what I write, imagining thou canst have continual re-

4. There embrace them with ardent love; and set such an high esteem on Wis-

5. Which will be a powerfull preservative to thee from the snares of the naughty Woman: who, though

though her company be so pernicious that God would have thee perfectly estranged from her, as if she were not of the Commonwealth of *Israel*, yet hath powerfull charms about her, to flatter those into her embraces, who are not heartily in love with Wisdom.

6. ¶ *For at the window of my house I looked through my casement,* 6. ¶ Of which a memorable instance comes now into my mind; for looking one day from my Chamber, through the lattices of the Window of my Palace;

7. *And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding,* 7. I observed, among the undisciplined and unexperienced Striplings of the City, one that was as childish and void of consideration, as he was youthfull and eager in his desires:

8. *Passing through the street near her corner, and he went the way to her house,* 8. Who, as if he had a mind to be undone, passed idly through the Street, till he came to a Corner, where naughty Women use to haunt: walking in as stately a manner, as he could devise, directly towards one of their Houses.

9. *In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night:* 9. It was in the twilight, while he might see his way and yet hope to be concealed: in the close of the day; which was followed by a night as dark as pitch, and fit for such works of darkness.

10. *And behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.* 10. There, on a suddain, I was surpris'd with the sight of a Woman starting forth; who did not stay till he came up to her, but went to meet him in a gaudy lascivious dress, apt to allure a weak young Man: who thought presently she was in love with him; when her heart, as full of subtilty as his was of folly, is reserved onely to her self.

11. (*She is loud and stubborn,
her feet abide not in her house.*

11. This is her character: She is full of talk, and of bold un-

seemly courtship; unruly and not to be controuled or broke of her will; idle also and always gadding abroad, as if she had no business (but with her foolish Lovers) at home.

12. *Now is she without, now in
the streets, and lieth in wait at e-
very corner)*

12. Sometimes she stands before her door; and, if that will not do, she goes

further into the streets and places of greatest concourse: and, more especially, waits at every corner (where she may look into two streets at once) to insnare such as are apt, like silly birds, to be taken by her.

13. *So she caught him and kis-
sed him, and with an impudent face
said unto him,*

13. At one of those corners (as I said) she met this young fool; and, contrary to all

the rules of modesty, caught him hard about the neck and kissed him: and after these amorous caresses put on still a bolder face, and, without any blushing made this following speech to him;

14. *I have peace-offerings with
me; this day have I payed my
vows.*

14. I am a happy Woman, in many blessings that God hath bestowed upon

me, for which I have give Him solemn thanks this very day: and, as Religion and Custom binds me, I have provided as good a Feast as those Sacrifices would afford, which I formerly vowed and now have paid; having no want of any thing, but of some good company at home to rejoyce with me. See Arg. [4]

15. *Therefore came I forth to
meet thee, diligently to seek thy
face, and I have found thee.*

15. Which made me go abroad to try if I could meet with thee (who art the ve-

ry person whom I came to seek) that I might invite and earnestly beseech thee to be so kind as to bear me company: And, to my great joy, this is added to all my other happiness, that I have found thee speedily and most opportunely.

16. I

16. *I have deckt my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt.*

16. There shall no other pleasures be wanting when our Feast is done; but from the Table we will remove to my Bed: which I have richly adorned with every thing that may please the eye; and made it as soft also as heart can wish.

17. *I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.*

17. Where thou shalt be entertained likewise with the sweetest perfumes, that ours or the neighbouring countries could furnish me withall; such as Myrrh, Aloes, and Cinnamon: wherewith I have sprinkled my Bed, to render it more gratefull to all thy senses.

18. *Come, let us take our fill of love untill the morning, let us solace our selves with loves.*

18. Why do we waste our time then here in the street? Come along with me, and let us go thither; and there satisfy our desires to the full with love: we will solace our selves with the sweetest pleasures; which shall not end till the morning light.

19. *For the good-man is not at home, he is gone a long journey;*

19. For there is no fear they should be interrupted or disturbed; the Man (whom they call my Husband) being from home, and not likely to return in hast: For he is gone to a place a great way off.

20. *He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed.*

20. Where he hath much business to dispatch; which will detain him so long, that I am sure it will be full noon (and now the new doth scarce yet appear, v. 9.) before he can be at home again. See Arg. [6]

21. *With much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.*

21. In the representing of these, and many other like specious pretences (of great affection to him, of all sorts of pleasure, of secrecy, and

and safety in their enjoyments) she shewed her self such a mistress of her art, that she bowed the heart of the young Man to become her disciple: and, having wrought upon his inclinations, she pursued her advantage with so much cunning; that she rather compelled than attracted him, by her charming voice, and her soft alluring language.

22. *He goeth after her straight-way, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks:*

a great Calf (as we speak in our language) or a stupid Ox; that fancies he is led to the pasture, when he is going to be killed; or like a fool, who takes it for an ornament, when the stocks are brought for his correction, to be clapt upon his legs.

23. *Till a dart strike through his liver, as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.*

till, like a rash Souldier that falls unexpectedly into an ambush, he received a mortal wound by that, which he fancied would be his highest satisfaction; or like a silly bird that greedy of the food which is laid to intice it, never minds the snare that is laid together with it; So he eagerly longing to tast of her Feast and the following delights, had not so much as a thought, that this was a design upon his life; and would not end, but in miseries infinitely greater than all his joys.

24. ¶ *Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth.*

feignedly, not deceitfully like those Harlots) of the folly and danger of these lewd courses, in which youth is prone to be engaged: and therefore do not look upon it as an idle speculation; but give diligent heed unto it, and be ruled by my Advice.

22. For he made not the least objection, but away he went immediately, and followed her like

23. Just so he hastily threw himself into her embraces, and dreamt of nothing but pleasure;

24. ¶ This is a true representation, my dear children, (whom I love un-

25. *Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths.*

25. Let not one of you so much as entertain a thought of going to such a woman;

much less of consenting to her enticements: or if any of you have been so unhappy as to be engaged in her company, let him think it is too much that he hath adventured to turn aside out of the right way, and not wander till he hath utterly lost himself in those strange paths, and cannot find his way back again.

26. *For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her.*

26. Do not presume of being safe in such courses, and of making a good re-

treat at last: For many have been the examples of no mean persons, who have fallen in their reputation, their estates, their healths, their comforts of life, and in truth have utterly perished by her: innumerable are the mighty men, both for valour and for wisdom, whom she hath brought to ruin. See Arg. [c].

27. *Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.*

27. In short, to follow her unto her house, as this young

man did, is the direct way to hell: every step that is taken to her Bed (unto which she invited him to ascend) is in truth a going down to the dismal chambers of death, and to the most horrid miseries.

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The folly and danger of yielding to those brutish lusts and affections whereby so many are mis-led, having been plainly discovered and lively described in the foregoing Chapter; the Wise man proceeds in his design, by appealing to all that read these things, whether they be not sufficiently cautioned against those courses which ruin them; and

and abundant care be not taken to make them really wise and happy. For he knew none could answer those questions negatively, which he asks in the beginning of the Chapter, (v. 1, 2, &c.) but all must confess they have been informed in the doctrine of Wisdom. Whom he represents as present every-where, and commending it self to all sorts of persons with a sincere affection (v. 6, &c.) as infinitely better than all the treasures which they greedily seek (v. 10.) and to be desired and valued upon so many accounts, that it is not easie to number them. Particularly, for that Prudence and that Authority, which it gives to those who are endued with it v. 12, 14, 15, &c.) and more than this because it makes them approach near unto God, the fountain of Wisdom and Goodness, and the original pattern of them, v. 21, 22, &c.

This is expressed in such magnificent language, that though Solomon I suppose thought of nothing, but the wise directions God had given them in his word, revealed to them by his Servant Moses and the Prophets; yet the ancient Christians thought his words might better be applied to the Wisdom revealed unto us in the Gospel by the Son of God: nay, to the Son of God himself, the Eternal Word, and Wisdom of the Father.

[a] Whom the Arians, by a false interpretation of a passage in this Chapter v. 22, indeavoured to prove a Creature: but according to the Hebrew verity, if this Text belong to that matter, appears to have been, as S. John speaks, with the Father in the beginning, being his onely begotten before all worlds. And so the word *קנה* which we translate possess sometimes signifies in Scripture; and as it is thus rendred by the LXX. in the XIII. Zach. 5. so ought it to be translated in IV. Gen. 1. (not I have gotten or possessed but) I have brought forth a man from the Lord: as Bochartus discourses in his Phaleg, p. 784.

But I said, if it belong to that matter, because the Fathers themselves are not resolved, whether these words, v. 22. may not rather be applied to our blessed Saviour, according to his humane Nature. For so the great Athanasius himself sometimes expounds them (though at other times he goes the other way) allowing the Arian sense of *ἐκνος*, he created me; this is not to be understood, saith he (in his *Expositio Fidei*, p. 242. Tom. 1.) of the Divinity of Christ; "but *ὡς ἀνθρώπος ἐκ τῆς Ἰν-
σῦς ἡγενηται*, is written of Jesus bodily, as he was born of the Virgin Mary. For of this *Κυριακὸς ἀνθρώπος* (as he speaks) whom he sent for our Salvation, it may be said truly that he was the beginning of God's ways: we have access by him to God the Father, as he himself saith, I am the way, which leads to the Father. And afterward in his Epistle about the Decrees of the Nicene Council, p. 262. he glosses upon these words in this manner; "the person who here speaks is indeed our Saviour, who is to be conceived to say this when He took a body, the Lord created me in the beginning of his ways. For as with respect to his being the Son of God, it is most agreeable to say, He was always, and in the bosom of the Father: So, being made a man, this saying was very becoming, the Lord created me. And, to name no more places, he interprets it thus several times in his third Oration against the Arians, p. 415, 417, &c. where he hath these words, It is as if he had said, My Father made me a body, and created me to be among men for their Salvation.

But this not being the sense of the words which Solomon first intended, I shall not build my Paraphrase upon it; but take wisdom here, as it signifies in other places of this Book and hath been hitherto described. Whom Solomon now celebrates for her most venerable Antiquity, as Aristobolus observes to Ptolemy in Eusebius his *Præpar. Evang. L. XIII. p. 667.* and introduces like a most

most beautifull person, no less than a Queen; or rather some Divine Being (infinitely to be preferred before that base Strumpet spoken of in the foregoing Chapter.) Who having finished her own praises, which, the truth is, better agree to that heavenly Doctrine afterwards delivered by our Lord Jesus Christ (who was the Wisdom of the Father, both as the Eternal $\Lambda\omicron\Gamma\omicron\varsigma$ subsisting with him before all worlds, and as He was appointed by the Holy Ghost to declare to us all the counsel of God) concludes with an earnest invitation unto all to become acquainted with her instructions; if they meant to be happy and would avoid the greatest miseries, v. 32, 33, &c.

There are so many notable lessons to be learnt out of this Chapter, that it would make this Preface too long, if I should mention them all. I shall therefore name onely one Doctrinal point, that if this Chapter be at all to be understood of the Divinity of the Son of God (which the Arians believed) then both his Eternity is most plainly here asserted, and also his distinct Subsistence and personality, as we speak, v. 22, 30. And these two Practical. First, that it is a vain pretence we make to Wisdom, if the fear of God and true Vertue be wanting, v. 13, 20. and Secondly, the whole Chapter supposes, what the last verse more particularly expresses, that every man's death and destruction is from himself; who wrongs his own Soul; and that against the desire and earnest frequent importunities of the Wisdom of God: unto which he will not hearken; but perversely rejects the seasonable reproofs and the wholesome advices, which, on many occasions, he meets withall to prevent his ruin.

They that follow the vulgar Latin fancies they find a Proverbial saying, v. 13. where that which we translate a froward mouth, they translate a mouth with two tongues: But I have followed the Hebrew, which speaks of a worse sort of perverse language than that phrase alone signifies.

1. **D**Oth not wisdom cry? and
understanding put forth
her voice?

1. **C**AN you then
hereafter pre-
tend ignorance, and
say you never had a-

ny caution given you against these snares? Or rather, have I not the greatest reason to chide you for your stupidity in hearkning unto those secret allurements to the deeds of darkness, when their shamefulnes is so apparent? and you have had so many open and loud admonitions given you to be wiser? and such serious and earnest endeavours have been used, by repeated instructions and reproofs to reclaim you from your folly?

2. *She standeth in the top of high
places, by the way in the places of
the paths.*

2. There is no pub-
lick Cryer better
heard and understood
by all, when from an

high place he makes proclamation to the people, than the rules of Wisdom and Vertue are: which do not lie concealed, nor can be altered at our pleasure; but present themselves continually to mens thoughts wheresoever they go, being as plain as the high-way, and remaining unmoveable and fixed, notwithstanding all the attempts that have been made to subvert them.

3. *She crieth at the gates, at
the entry of the city, at the coming
in at the doors.*

3. Let their busi-
ness be what it will,
whether in the Courts
of Judgment, or a-

mong those that traffick in the City, or in their own private habitation, still they know what their duty is: which their own Conscience, as well as God's Ministers, rings so continually in their ears; that they cannot avoid such informations.

4. *Unto you, O men, I call, and
my voice is to the sons of man.*

4. Which they hear
as plainly and di-
stinctly, as if Wis-

dom it self should call to them from above, saying; hearken, O men, of whatsoever rank and condition you be: whether high or low, rich or poor; for my instructions are common to you all.

5. O ye simple ones, understand wisdom; and ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

5. Your fault is, that you are inconsiderate and easily cheated (VII. 21, 22.)

or, which is worse, stupidly bent to follow your sensual appetite; as if you had no better inclinations: But if you will attend, I will make you more circumspect and wary; and dispose you to be led by prudent counsels.

6. Hear, for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things.

6. Do not turn away your ears, but listen to my words; for I will teach you

things most worthy of your notice and choice: which will conduct you safely in all the passages of your life; and lay before you such a plain, direct and easie path, that if you walk in it you shall not miss of being happy.

7. For my mouth shall speak truth, and wickedness is an abomination to my lips.

7. For I will utter nothing rashly, or contrary to the truth; all falsehood, deceit

and whatsoever may doe hurt, being so detestable to me, and so far from my thoughts, that the correction of such wickedness is the aim of my discourse:

8. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness, there is nothing froward or perverse in them.

8. Every word of which is exactly conformable to the rule of Righteousness:

there is nothing I injoin or forbid merely to hamper and perplex you, or to abridge you of your just liberty; much less to misguide and pervert you, in the pursuit of what is good for you.

9. They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

9. But, whatsoever they may seem to inconsiderate and prejudiced minds, they

will all manifestly appear equal and just unto him that uses his reason; and approve themselves, as I said, exactly conformable to the strictest rules of Righteousness, unto well-disposed minds; who will be at the pains to know the difference between right and wrong, or between that which is good and that which is evil for them.

10. Re-

10. *Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.*

10. They will not think me unreasonable, when I commend the very rebukes

which I give them (though administred by some sharp affliction, III. 14.) and set such a high price upon them, as to advise every one to accept them rather than silver; and to value the knowledge of God, and of themselves and of all things else (which these corrections teach them) above the choicest gold.

11. *For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired, are not to be compared to it.*

11. For true Wisdom is such an inestimable Jewel, that the most precious Pearls are trash to it:

nor can our boundless fancies present any thing to our wishes, that is worthy to come in competition with it.

12. *I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.*

12. For what is there comparable to a prudent Mind, which is not crafty to de-

ceive, but so cautious as not to be deceived? And this I may boast is solely in my power to endow men withall; who ever give the safest, nay infallible Advice, and direct men to discreeter Resolutions in the most difficult cases, than the subtlest head in the world, that consults not with me, can invent for his Clients.

13. *The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth do I hate.*

13. And my Rules are as short as they are sure: For I teach men in the first place religiously to wor-

ship and stand in awe of the Divine Majesty: which is but a vain pretence, I further instruct them, if it do not make them abominate all manner of evil, though but in design: more particularly, I hate that vain opinion men have of their own abilities to compass their designs, which makes them forget God, and despise the wholesome advice of honest men; as I likewise do the use of all unlawfull means, though the end be good; especially, lying, calumny, detraction, breach of faith, which every one must renounce who will have my Friendship.

14. *Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding, I have strength.* 14. Who am the ablest Counsellour in all deliberations; and give men the most

certain, solid and never failing advice, for the effecting their desires, or being contented with disappointments: For I comprehend whatsoever is fit to be done or omitted in all undertakings; and inspire men also with courage to persist in good resolutions, which are neither rashly taken nor wrongfully pursued.

15. *By me Kings reign, and Princes decree justice.* 15. Kings themselves sit not fast on their Thrones, tho'

placed there by God himself, unless they be ruled by me: the wisest Senators cannot support themselves and them, but by persuading them to enact and execute just and merciful Laws, for the government of their people.

16. *By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.* 16. In vain do their great Captains, or other Ministers endeavour

to defend them, but under the conduct and protection of my vertuous discipline: Nobles and all the Judges of the land lose their Authority, if they do not faithfully observe the Rules that I prescribe them.

17. *I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me.* 17. Which are no less amiable than they are easily known: there needing no

more to come acquainted with me, but onely to love me: For they that love me are beloved of me; and as they will not fail to seek what they love, so they shall certainly find what they studiously seek.

18. *Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness.* 18. And together with me, they shall find such riches and honour, as shall add

to the greatness and splendour, and stability of their Kingdoms and Dignities: for not merely riches and honour are in my donation, but durable possessions; which will last the longer, because they are not gotten either by oppression, or by

by niggardice: for I teach men both to do justly and to love mercy also. (IV. *Dan.* 24.)

19. *My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold: and my revenue than choice silver.*

fy, never so refined; a Revenue of higher value, than the purest and choicest Silver in the World.

20. *I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:*

thoughts: which teach them how to use those earthly goods, and govern themselves with such exactness in all their private transactions or publick administrations; as never to swerve from the steady rules of justice and equity.

21. *That I may cause those that love me, to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.*

stantial satisfaction; which I conferr on all those that sincerely love me and adhere unto me: whose Souls I will fill as full, with abundance of inestimable riches, as their Treasures are with Silver, and Gold, and all other stores.

22. *The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.*

participation of Him and communion with Him (III. 19, 20.) with whom I was ever present (as well as always most dear unto Him) not onely when he began to create this World; but before he made any of his Works: when as yet there was Nothing but himself.

23. *I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.*

it: All Antiquity comes infinitely short of mine; who was before the Earth it self, the common mother of all mankind. (I. *Gen.* 1.)

19. Whereby I bring them in greater Treasures than Gold, though never so manifoldly,

20. For I set their minds and hearts aright; and enrich them with excellent

21. In order to their happy settlement in a state of eternal peace and substantial

22. For the LORD himself hath no greater riches than me, who lead men to a

23. My Sovereignty and Dominion is from everlasting; and hath no superiour to

24. *When there were no depths, I was brought forth: when there were no fountains abounding with water.*

sources and springs: whose excellent greater value than any other, owe their rise unto me, the inexhausted fountain of all things.

25. *Before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth:*

were settled; or there was so much as a hillock to be seen in the earth.

26. *While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.*

and put it into this form of lofty mountains and spacious plains: no, there was not so much as the first atome of this globe whereon you tread.

27. *When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:*

heavens into this wonderfull order, wherein we behold them, as well as when he moved upon that confused Abyss which they inclosed, and fashioned the earth into a regular shape.

28. *When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:*

the air, that they shall not fall down all together, but by drops upon the earth: and provided strong Cisterns for the waters pent up there; from whence they gush out forcibly, and yet wear not away the passages He hath opened for them.

29. *When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not*

24. When as yet there were no depths (I. Gen. 2.) I was conceived in the mind of God, long before the

waters, which are of
25. Who had a being before the mountains, from whence those waters run,

26. For as yet the Lord had not made the earth it self (as I said before, v. 23.) much less adorned it,

27. But why do I speak of the earth alone? I was present when he disposed the

28. When he made the watry clouds also, with admirable Wisdom, so firm in

29. When he prescribed also to the Sea its limits, that the waters
pass

pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

ters thereof (though they swell and toſs up and down) ſhall not paſs over the ſhores

wherein He hath confined them: and when he ſettled the Earth ſo ſtedfaſtly, like a building upon ſure foundations, that it remains unmovable in the place he appointed for it.

30. *Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoycing always before him:*

30. Then was I with Him, nay, very near unto Him; contriving all theſe things: nor had He

any higher pleaſure than me, who day by day, during the Creation of the World, produced ſome lovely work or other; in which He rejoyced, to ſee how good and agreeable they were, I. Gen. 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31.

31. *Rejoycing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the ſons of men.*

31. More particularly, I diſplayed my ſkill in the vaſt variety of Creatures,

wherewith I have beautified this Earth, wherein you dwell; which afford a moſt delightful ſpectacle unto me, and unto all wiſe obſervers: who may ſee, that, above all the reſt, my principal thoughts were fixed upon the children of men (I. Gen. 26.) in whom I delighted exceedingly (as the Lord doth in me, v. 30.) beholding them made in the image of God, and after his Likeneſs; capable to converſe with me.

32. *Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for bleſſed are they that keep my ways.*

32. Who may therefore juſtly expect (all theſe things conſidered) that you

ſhould cheerfully embrace my repeated Counſels; and, as dutiful children, take the greateſt pleaſure in being obedient to them: For bleſſed, you cannot but ſee, bleſſed, beyond all expreſſion, are they who obſerve (as all other creatures do) the Laws that I have preſcribed them.

33. *Hear inſtruction, and be wiſe, and reſuſe it not.*

33. Hearken, I beſeech you, and yield to the voice of your

own reaſon, and of God's holy Word and Spirit: which checks the irregular motions which you find at any time in you: and

be so wise and considerate, as not to slight and reject it.

34. *Blessed is the man that beareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.*

34. But rather invite such Instructions, by giving them thankful entertain-

ment, and going thither where you may meet with them: For happy, more happy than can be expressed, is that man, who not onely hearkens obediently when he is told his duty, but makes it his business to be rightly informed; neglecting no opportunity, but constantly and diligently attending there, where he may be taught how he ought to live; most earnestly desiring to become my disciple, and to be governed by me.

35. *For who so findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.*

35. In which, whatsoever pains he bestows, he shall not lose his labour: For as

he shall not fail to find what he seeks, so he shall find withall, that I will make his life a perpetual pleasure to him; for I have demonstrated that he must needs be beloved of the Lord, to whom I am most nearly ally'd, and from him he shall obtain his heart's desire.

36. *But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul; all they that hate me, love death.*

36. From whence it is manifest, that he who violates my laws, doth the greatest injury unto his own Soul: and whosoever they be that hate to be

reproved for it, and can neither indure to be told of their faults, nor receive any good advice, they love to be miserable, and wilfully bring upon themselves utter destruction.

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

In this Chapter the Wise man seems to me to illustrate more fully, what he had delivered in the conclusion of the foregoing (v. 32, 34, 35.) concerning the satisfaction and happiness they might expect to find, who would

would attend at the gates, and submit themselves to the government of that heavenly Wisdom; which he had described to be acquainted with all the secrets of the Almighty. And which he here again represents as a glorious Queen, the daughter of heaven, adorned with all perfections (and [a] therefore uses a word of the plural number (v. 1.) whereby to express her excellencies) living in a stately Palace; unto which she invites all misguided Souls, and promises them, if they will forsake their follies, the most delicious entertainment.

[b] Which is set forth under the notion of a Feast, whereby the holy Writers are wont to express (as the aptest resemblance of it that can be found) the high satisfaction, joy and pleasure, which the principles of Wisdom and Vertue fill our hearts withall; when we have such a true relish of them, that we embrace them and digest them, and are invivened by them to a pious life.

This is the substance of the Parable; every part of which is not, to be minutely scann'd: nor shall I go about to say what is particularly meant [c] by the seven pillars of Wisdom's house (though taking her house for the World, the seven pillars may well be thought the seven planets) what by her meat, what by her drink, &c. but look upon them onely as a description of the ability of Wisdom to impart compleat satisfaction unto those that entertain her precepts. Which were principally taught in the Schools of the Prophets; whose business it was to instruct the people (as the Scribes did afterward) in the Law of God: and being dispersed in several places of the Country, I have conjectured their Schools might be the House here spoken of, where Wisdom had her habitation. I cannot say certainly how many of them there were, much less that there were just seven principal Schools, which might be lookt upon as the main supporters of Religion and Vertue: but there were more than one it is evident from the sacred History, where

where in one City, 1 Sam. IX. 13, 14. we find Samuel seated (in whose times these Schools began to flourish) who no doubt had there a College of Prophets with him, as he had afterward, we find at Ramah, XIX. 20. and in another place called the Hill of God, where the Philistines had a Garrison, we meet with another company of Prophets, 1 Sam. X. 5. 10. And in after times there were Sons of the Prophets both at Bethel (where they seem to have been more anciently, 1 Sam. X. 3.) and at Jericho, 2 King. II. 3, 5. and at Gilgal, IV. 38.

These Schools also were seated in high places it appears from 1 Sam. IX. 2. X. 5, 10. [d] 2 King. I. 9. (and might be one reason of their sacrificing in such places) which agrees exactly with what is said here of Wisdom's crying upon the highest places of the city, v. 3. to call all those who had an appetite, to come and partake of her Instructions. Which there was some hope all those might do, who were merely inconsiderate and deluded (v. 4.) though scorners (as he observes, v. 7, 8. who perhaps called the Prophets Mad men) are so incapable of correction that nothing will move them to become better; and therefore she passes them by, and leaves them to their beastly folly: which inclines them rather to listen to the inticements of such filthy Strumpets as he had described, Chap. VII.

Against whom there cannot be too much caution, the Strumpets house being, as St. Chrysostom (Hom. 2. upon St. Matth.) calls it, the very shop of the Devil: and therefore the Wise man again gives her Character in this Chapter, (v. 13, 14, &c.) and represents the danger of being drawn in by her; that, if it was possible, he might make men sensible, there is nothing more inconsistent with wisdom than to give up themselves to those impure lusts, which have been the ruin of all those that have been led by them.

That

That is one of the profitable lessons to be learnt from this Chapter: in which the Wise Man concludes his Preface to the Book of Proverbs. And therefore again repeats once more (v. 10.) that first Principle upon which all Religion is built, wherewith he began this Preface (I. 7.) The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. Which they that want will be apt to make a laughter of all good instructions; and it is well if they be not angry at those, who are so kind as to reprove them. If they be it is best to let them alone, and not cast pearls before swine; as our Saviour teaches, [e] agreeable to the Doctrine of the Wise Man, v. 7, 8, 9. of this Chapter.

*Where the Lord Bacon (L. VIII. Advanc. of Learning, C. 2. Parab. 9.) is very curious and distinguishes between a scorner and a wicked man (mentioned v. 7.) and between shame or reproach, and a blot; and consequently between reproof given to the one and rebuke to the other. "For a scorner, saith he, onely makes us
"lose our labour; but the other repays us with a stain
"and dishonour. When a man instructs a scorner his
"time indeed which he thus imployes is thrown away,
"and others deride his pains, as a labour ill placed;
"and the scorner himself also despiseth the knowledge
"which he is taught. Thus a man is put to shame.
"But the matter is transacted with greater danger in
"the reprehension of the other, because a wicked nature,
"not onely gives no ear to advice, but turns head
"against his Reprehender, now made odious to him:
"whom he either wounds presently with contumelies
"before his face, or traduces afterwards to others be-
"hind his back.*

But I have not been thus nice in my Paraphrase, because it is the manner, I observe, of the Wise Man to repeat the same thing, in the same Verse, in other words, throughout all this Book: and a scorner signifies the worst of men.

[f] *In the ninth Verse also the same great person, following the Vulgar and reading the words thus, give occasion to a wise man, and his wisdom will be increased, makes this witty observation (in the same Chap. Parab. XXXII.) that "occasion when it is offered, "shews the difference between Wisdom that is ripened into habit, and that which swims onely in the brain and conceit, or is boasted in speech, but "hath not taken deep root. For the former upon occasion presented, whereby it may be exercised, is instantly quickened, addresses it self to the business, and is so enlarged and dilated, that it seems greater than it self: but the other, which, before occasion, was brisk and busie, now occasion is given becomes amazed and confused; So that even he who presumed himself possessed of it, begins to be in doubt, whether his pre-conceptions of such wisdom, were not mere dreams, and "empty speculations.*

But there being no such word as occasion in the Original, and the word give seeming to me rather to referr to what the Wise man is speaking of, viz. reproof or instruction, I have waved this observation: which will do well alone, but not be connected with the Discourse; which is my design to represent. And here note this as a mark of a hopefull person, that is likely to become wise, if he be not galled with reproof; at which fools are wont to kick. This is a Truth to be considered most seriously, by which every man may take a measure of himself, whether he be likely to come to good or no. If he cannot endure to be told of his faults, it is a shrewd sign he is in the way to be undone; and hath not as yet so much as approached to the gates of Wisdom.

Which admonishes us here of another great fault of mankind, [g] who are most eager after that, which is prohibited to them. An observation which is as true of their fondness and readiness to embrace heretical Doctrines
(to

(to which the Fathers apply v. 17.) if they be preached in a corner, and made a great secret; as of their appetite after those pleasures, from which they are restrained, and cannot have with publick approbation.

1. **W**isdom hath builded her house, she hath bewen out her seven pillars.

knowledge or skill, but the most absolute and accomplished Wisdom; whose worth and dignity is inexpressible: For as this great world I told you (VIII. 26, 27, &c.) was built by wisdom in most excellent order and perfect beauty; so from every part of it we may learn what regard we ought to have to her holy precepts: which are taught every where, but especially in the Schools of the Prophets. See Arg. [a] [b] [c].

2. She hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table.

and thirsty souls (that are desirous to know what is good for themselves) who shall find no less life, and vigour, and strength, and joy communicated to them from her sacred Instructions, than the body doth when it partakes of a liberal and most delicious Feast.

3. She hath sent forth her maidens, she crieth upon the highest places of the city.

ment; unto which her attendants and Ministers (persons of uncorrupted purity and sincerity) are sent to invite you, with a loud voice and earnest intreaties: which cannot but be heard by whole cities and countries; unto whom the dwelling places of wisdom, and the food of souls lie openly exposed. See Arg. [d].

4. Who so is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

1. **D**O not imagine that I commend unto you some meaner piece of

2. There, above all other places, a most plentiful provision is made for all hungry

3. For nothing is wanting there, but onely Guests to accept of her entertain-

4. There is no man so silly but he may be welcome to it; or rather all such persons

sons are desired to bethink themselves, how inconsiderately they have been seduced, and to forbear the prosecution of their foolish desires so long, as to take advice of her. Let a man be never so much besotted with vice and wickedness, she doth not reject him, nor despair of him; if he will but hearken, when she makes this gracious motion to the whole knot of them;

5. *Come, eat my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.*

profound to you: credit me so far as to rely upon the promise which I make you of the highest comfort, pleasure, and satisfaction, in embracing and obeying my precepts.

6. *For sake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.*

and senseless courses, of which you can give no account to your selves; and immediately you shall have a taste of happiness, which will invite you to perfect it, by following hereafter the deliberate dictates of sober reason, and the grave counsels of prudent persons, who have discerning minds, and practise themselves what they commend to others.

7. *He that reproveth a scorner, getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked man, getteth himself a blot.*

them; for reproofs are fittest for such persons, and he who performs that charitable office, not onely loses his labour, but is like to be requited with reprobates: whosoever he be that rebukes one of those impious wretches, hath commonly all the dirt thrown upon him, that their malice can rake together. See Arg. [d] [e].

8. *Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.*

Instructions, nor require her Ministers to call upon them; but

5. Draw near, consider, and lay to heart, the wholesome Instructions which I

6. Do but make a trial, by forsaking all ill company, and those childish desires,

7. As for those that deride Religion and scoff at all good admonitions, it is in vain to meddle with

8. Therefore men of that wicked temper Wisdom doth not invite to her instructions, nor require her Ministers to call upon them; but

but rather to pass them by, when they find by experience that they can do no good to such persons, but only draw their hatred upon themselves: from such it is wisdom to turn away, and bestow reproofs upon those who have so much understanding, as to see God's Ministers intend their good, and accordingly thank them for it, and give them opportunity to do them further service.

9. *Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.*

9. For this is an undoubted Maxim, that a man disposed to learn will grow wiser even by Repre-

hension; and the Instructions given to a man inclined to goodness, will make him better, and much improve him, not only in knowledge but in the practice of virtue, (whereas a scorner grows worse by indeavours to reform him, and is only made more incapable of good advice, by being exasperated and enraged at it.) See Arg. [f].

10. *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.*

10. And the very first, and indeed the principal thing that is to be instilled into all mens minds,

without which they will learn nothing else, is a Religious sense of the Divine Majesty, and an awfull regard towards him (as I have observed already more than once, I. 7. II. 5. VIII. 13. but it cannot be too oft repeated.) And next to this, that no knowledge deserves the Name of *Understanding*, but that which is delivered by the Holy Men of God, and disposes us to devote our selves unto Him in holy obedience.

11. *For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.*

11. Other knowledge may make thee subtle and cunning in thy worldly affairs,

but this alone can make thee happy: And will certainly both prolong thy life (as I have frequently said, III. 2, 16. IV. 10, 13, &c.) and lengthen it in health, peace, prosperity and pleasure.

12. *If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thy self: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.*

12. This is the true reason I invite thee so earnestly to imbibe my Doctrine, (v. 5.)

not for my own sake, but for thine: who alone wilt either reap the profit of being truly vertuous; or suffer all the harm and mischief (which will not in the least redound to me) of thy prophane scoffs and jeers at Religion and Goodness.

13. ¶ *A foolish woman is clamorous; she is simple, and knoweth nothing.*

13. ¶ Unto which prophaneness as there wants not temptations, so there is none

more dangerous, I think, which makes me mention it so often (II. 16. V. 3. VI. 24. VII. 10, 11, &c.) than the lewd and impious Adulterers; who is no less bold and importunate; than she is bewitching and powerfull to besot the minds of her stupid lovers; but perfectly ignorant of God and Religion, and a stranger to all the principles of vertue.

14. *For she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city,*

14. Which she openly opposes, for (as if she would put a manifest affront upon

them) in that very place where the Ministers of Wisdom call men to learn the fear of the Lord (v. 3, 10.) she sits in state at the door of her house, to divert their minds from all such thoughts, and drown them in sensual pleasures.

15. *To call passengers who go right on their ways.*

15. That's the very business of her life, to defeat all good

designs; by drawing even those aside into her chambers of impurity, who were going streight forward to the schools of wisdom and goodness.

16. *Who so is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,*

16. Whose words (v. 4.) she no less impudently than prophanely returns, and tells them, It is not

she, but wisdom and vertue that makes men fools; by confining their desires, and denying them the liberties which she invites them to come and injoy in her embraces: where their dulness shall learn this unknown secret.

17. *Stolen*

17. *Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.* 17. That there are no pleasures comparable to those, which a man gets by stealth from them to whom they properly belong: no morsel so sweet, as that which is forbidden; but, having been long desired, he finds at last a private opportunity, to taste of without danger. See Arg. [g].

18. *But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.* 18. But the poor deluded wretch considers not all this while (which I have often already represented, II. 18. V. 5. VII. 27. and is all that I shall oppose to those sinfull inticements) that she invites him to his utter ruin both of soul and body (See II. 18.) and sinks all those down, who accept of her invitation, to the very bottom of that pit, where the old Giants are, who corrupted mankind with such filthiness and violence, that they brought a deluge upon the earth, VI. Gen. 4, 5; 11.

C H A P. X.

The Proverbs of Solomon.

A R G U M E N T.

Here now properly begins the Book of the Proverbs (as the Title of this Chapter tells us) what hath been delivered hitherto, being rather a Preface; to awaken attention; and from sundry arguments to commend the wise Instructions, which now follow, to every ones practice; and to caution those, who would receive benefit by these Instructions, from such things as may hinder their edification in the School of Wisdom.

Whose Lessons, in this first part of the Book, (which reaches to the 17th Verse of the XXII. Chapter) are delivered in short Sentences; every Verse being a Lesson by it self, which commonly hath no connexion with

that which goes before and follows after : or if there be any, it is not so clear as to be easily made out. And these Lessons are for the most part delivered, either by way of Antithesis, i. e. comparing opposites one with another ; the wise, for instance, and the foolish, the diligent and the sluggish, the rich and the poor, and, in general virtue and vice, assigning to each their proper rewards and punishments : or they are mere Parables, that is, similitudes ; in which one thing is compared to another that resembles it.

And he intending to instruct all sorts of men in their several kinds of life, these Lessons are very various ; and do not merely inform them about their manners, but about the events also, which are wont (either frequently or sometimes) to accompany or follow such and such estates, offices, and actions of humane life. And some are directions for single persons ; others for the ordering of household affairs ; and others for the government of kingdoms. In short, some are divine Precepts ; others civil Advertisements for the management of our selves in several passages of humane life : to the observance of which he excites the Reader sometimes by promises, sometimes by threatenings.

It is not to be expected that in a Paraphrase, I should preserve the smartness that is in many of these Sentences : And it will be hard to abridge, as I have done hitherto, the Contents of each Chapter. Yet, I shall attempt something in it : And though I cannot say there is an order observed in them all (they being onely a Collection of wise Observations and Aphorisms, in which, Method is wont to be neglected by other Authors) yet the first Sentence of this Chapter, seems not to have been casually, [a] but designedly set in the front of the rest. Because nothing contributes so much every way to the happiness of mankind, as a Religious care about the Education of Children. Which Parents are here admonished to attend, if they desire their Children

dren should not prove a grief and shame to them : and Children are put in mind of the Obedience they owe to their Instructions, that they may be a joy to their Parents.

The Lord Bacon (in his Advancement of Learning, L. VIII. C. 2. Parab. VII.) thinks that the gladness and heaviness, which are in Fathers and Mothers, according as their Children prove good or bad, are here so accurately distinguished by Solomon; "that
" he would represent a wise and well-governed Son, to
" be chiefly a comfort to the Father, who knows the
" value of wisdom and vertue better than the Mother
" (which account the Hebrews also give of this matter) and therefore rejoices more at the forwardness
" of his Son: which he not onely better understands,
" but hath taken perhaps so much more care about his
" Education, that the good fruits of it give him a
" greater joy than they can do to the Mother. Who on
" the other side is more grieved and discomfited at
" the calamity of a Son; both because the affection of a
" Mother is more soft and tender, and perchance is
" conscious to her self that by too much indulgence she
" hath tainted and corrupted his tender years. She
" is more at home also (it may be added) and therefore,
" having her Son's folly more in her eye, hath a greater
" share in the grief that it causes.

But this is not to be too much pressed, I think, for both of them have such a share either in the joy or in the sorrow, that it is as hard to distinguish between them constantly, as it is to make a difference between the joy and grief for the well or ill doing of a Son, and the well or ill doing of a Daughter: which may be, and oft-times are, equal. And therefore I have but just touched upon this in my Paraphrase of the first verse. Concerning which I shall note this further, that whether these Instructions were written with a peculiar respect to the education of Solomon's own Son, or indifferently

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But this is not to be too much pressed, I think, for both of them have such a share either in the joy or in the sorrow, that it is as hard to distinguish between them constantly, as it is to make a difference between the joy and grief for the well or ill doing of a Son, and the well or ill doing of a Daughter: which may be, and oft-times are, equal. And therefore I have but just touched upon this in my Paraphrase of the first verse. Concerning which I shall note this further, that whether these Instructions were written with a peculiar respect to the education of Solomon's own Son, or indifferently

for all, it was most judiciously done to begin with such as this first part chiefly consists of: there being so great a necessity (as the forenamed Writer observes in his VIIth Book Chap. 3.) "that men drink deeply all pious and moral knowledge before they taste of politick, that they who are bred up in the Courts of Princes, and in affairs of State from tender years, rarely attain to inward and sincere probity of manners. For not being seasoned with Religion and the Doctrine of manners and offices of life, their judgments are corrupted and made to think, that there are no true and solid moral differences of things, but all things are to be measured by utility and success. And in this false opinion they are the more immoveably settled if to ill education, there be added the fewel of bad Books: which all those will reject with disdain, who shall be so happy as to make this Book their early study.

In which there follow here immediately (and very properly) some Instructions about getting riches, and about the keeping and using them aright (v. 2, 3, &c.) that a curse may not be intailed upon them, and descend with them unto our children. And then v. 7. a memorable observation is annexed, [b] (which Plato, as Eusebius observes, translated into his VIIth Book of Laws) concerning the fame of good and bad men, after they are dead. About which the same great man before named (the Lord Bacon) hath this Note in the same VIIIth Book, Parab. 8. That the name of good men after Envy is extinguish'd (which cropt the blossom of their Fame, while they were alive) presently shoots up and flourisheth; and their Praises daily increase in strength and vigour: But for wicked men (though their fame through the partial favour of Friends, and of men of their own faction, may last for a little time) a detestation of their name springs up not long after; and at last those vanishing praises
end

end in infamy, and like bodies that putrefie, expire in a filthy and noisome odour. *And thus the LXX. in this place instead of the memory of the just is blessed, or is with blessing or benediction, have these words, the memory of the just is with encomiums or praises: which is the true explication of the phrase. And accordingly the Church commemorates the Saints of God, recounting their worthy deeds, and praising Him for them. Of which see Mr. Mede Discourse XXII.*

The rest of the Chapter consists of mixt observations, concerning the difference between wise men and fools, idle persons and diligent, ill-natured people and those who are candid and kind (v. 12.) and especially between the vices and virtues of the tongue, and their rewards and punishments, v. 13, 14, &c. And one remarkable observation is inserted, v. 22. which belongs to [c] that head of diligence and laboriousness: upon which, he remembers us, no man is so to depend, as to imagine to obtain what he would have by that alone; but to look up to God as the donor of all good things, and giving success to our industry. Which was a thing little thought of by heathens, who were too prone to imagine all things requisite unto happiness, to be placed in themselves. But the Scriptures every where inculcate this, that it is God who gives wisdom to the wise, and victory to the valiant, and riches to the diligent, and good success to the prudent and potent, &c.

[d] *Unto which add that observation also, v. 24. which may be further improved than is expressed in the Paraphrase, to this sence; that wicked men many times draw upon themselves that which they feared, by those very means whereby they study to avoid them. An Example of which (as Bochartus observes in his Phaleg, L. 1. c. 16. Part. 1.) we have in those that built the Tower of Babel: who for fear of dispersion designed to*
build

build a City and a Tower, saying, Go to, let us build, &c. lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth, XI. Gen. 4. But God so ordered it that this very attempt was the occasion of their dispersion, and brought what they feared sooner upon them, atque ipsum mali remedium illis cessit in periculum: the very remedy of the evil they would have avoided, leading them directly into it.

R. Levi hath an observation that the precepts of Wisdom from the beginning of this Chapter to the 10th verse of the XVIIIth are in a manner all concerning the danger of several sorts of vice and wickedness: and afterward they are all concerning other subjects. Which, how true it is, I shall there consider.

1. **T**HE proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father; but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.

be equal to the joy he will have in their well-doing: and let the Mother beware that her indulgence do not spoil them; for she will have the greatest share in the heaviness, which their untowardness will give them. See Arg. [4].

2. Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death.

2. This is more necessary than the care of heaping up riches for them (which many times tempt men to fraud and oppression) for though great treasures be gotten by such means, they will be so far from availing the owners in time of distress, that they will rather expose them to be a prey; when justice and mercy with a little wealth, will procure safety and deliverance from the greatest dangers.

3. The LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he tasteth away the substance of the wicked.

3. The reason is, the Lord hath Treasures in store, for the just, especially for the mercifull man; and will send him such supplies in his straits, that he shall not starve,

starve, but rather have enough: But He will drive the wicked out of their ill-gotten possessions, whereby they think to secure themselves from want.

4. *He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack band: but the band of the diligent maketh rich.* 4. And next unto Vertue let Children be bred up to Industry; without which

indeed they cannot be vertuous: for both poverty and fraud are commonly the fruit of negligence and sloth; when an active diligence is wont to enrich men, without the help of deceit.

5. *He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.* 5. Especially if prudence be added to diligence and opportunity be not neglected: For as he that makes Hay (as we speak) while the Sun shines, is commended for his provident care; so he that by taking his ease, when he should gather the fruits of the earth, loses all the benefit of his former labours, is a shame to himself, and unto those that bred him.

6. *Blessings are upon the head of the just: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.* 6. The blessings of heaven shall visibly descend in great plenty, upon the just and mercifull man: but their own iniquity shall violently overwhelm those, to their utter confusion, who wickedly defraud and oppress their neighbours.

7. *The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.* 7. And though Envy may sometime cloud a good man for the present, yet after

death an honourable mention shall be made of him; and he shall be commemorated with praises: when the memory of the wicked, who now perhaps are extolled, shall either perish or stink and be abominated. See Arg. [6].

8. *The wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool shall fall.* 8. He that is truly wise will thankfully receive such good advices as these, and avoid the dangers of which he is admonished: But he whose

whose wisdom lies onely in his tongue (which moves upon all occasions, and will not let him learn of others) ruins himself, even by his own imprudent prating.

9. *He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.* 9. He that deals sincerely in all his actions is both safe and secure: but he

that relies upon fraud and tricks of deceiving shall find his cunning fail him at the last; and besides can never be secure that he shall not be detected and made a publick reproach.

10. *He that winketh with the eye, causeth sorrow: but a prating fool shall fall.* 10. But he especially, that under pretence of kindness betrays his neighbour,

and gives the sign to others, when he would have them circumvent him is a common grievance; and shall himself, in the end, feel the miserable effects of his falseness: for he is worse than a man, who openly professing his malice rails perpetually, and thereby, sooner hurts himself than others.

11. *The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.* 11. The discourse of a good man (like a perpetual spring of wholesome water) al-

ways tends to the profit, comfort, and refreshment of those that receive it: but a wicked man, how fair soever his language be, doth but conceal the mischief, which (like pestilent waters out of a deep pit) he designs to produce when opportunity serves.

12. *Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.* 12. Such is the difference between hatred and love, that

where all things are in quiet, *hatred* raises up disturbance, and makes men quarrel about trifles; when *love* pacifies the minds of those that it finds provoked by real offences, and composes all those contentions, for which there was too much occasion.

13. *In the lips of him that hath understanding, wisdom is found: but a rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding.* 13. He that would be wise must seek the acquaintance of some intelligent person: but

but the most knowing person in the world cannot make him wise that is void of consideration; who will never learn, unless perhaps by some great affliction.

14. *Wise men lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction.*

14. Wise men treasure up knowledge, and reserve it till a fitting opportunity

to make use of it: but a fool is always talking, and seldom opens his mouth but it proves a present mischief to himself or others.

15. *The rich man's wealth is his strong city: the destruction of the poor is their poverty.*

15. Riches are a powerfull defence to their owners against a great many evils, to

which we are subject in this life; and naturally raise mens minds, and make them confident: whereas poverty exposes men to injuries and abuses; and is apt to depress and deject their spirits.

16. *The labour of the righteous tendeth to life; the fruit of the wicked to sin.*

16. Which is a great motive to an honest diligence; but then remember this,

that the end of a vertuous man's labours after riches is onely that he may provide himself the necessaries of life, and that he may do good with them: but the great revenues, which perhaps are left to a wicked man by his ancestours without any pains of his own, are employed to satisfy his sinfull lusts and passions.

17. *He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof, erreth.*

17. He that carefully observes, and puts men in mind of these wholesom admonitions,

which may teach them to correct and amend their lives, is in the way to make himself and others happy: but he that leaves off to give reproof encourages men in their errors; from which, he who shuns those that are wont to reprehend him, is never like to be reclaimed.

18. *He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth slander, is a fool.*

18. He that dissembleth his hatred, by great professions of

of Friendship before ones face, and then goes and vents it in slanders behind his back, may seem a cunning man; but is really an impious fool.

19. *In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips, is wise.*

speaking is rarely innocent: therefore he that is sparing of his words, and considers well both when, and where, and what he speaks, is a truly prudent person.

20. *The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.*

solid and sincere; but let wicked men devise and study what they please, it will be good for little, or rather very mischievous.

21. *The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom.*

a fool, for want of consideration, receives no benefit by them, and doth not so much as take care to save himself.

22. *The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.*

riches; but the blessing of God prospering their endeavours: which when he favours, wealth flows in apace upon them; and is enjoyed also without anxious thoughts and labours.
See Arg. [c]

23. *It is as a sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.*

ted by himself, or others: but a man that weighs things wisely considers that this is no laughing matter; and takes that pleasure in doing well, which fools take in mischievous wickedness.

19. Nor are calumny and flattery the onely vices of the tongue; but much

20. The words of such a man are exceeding valuable; because they are both

21. Many are preserved from perishing by the discourses of a good man: But

22. It is not merely mens industry and provident care, to which they owe their

23. A senseless sinner makes a jest of the most horrid impleties that can be committed

24. *The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him; but the desire of the righteous shall be granted.*

shall feel what he fears: but this is the comfort of righteous men, who have reason to hope, that they shall at length obtain their desires. See Argument [4]

25. *As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation,*

in his way, yet he quickly vanishes, and destroys himself by his own violence: but the righteous, as he is fixt and settled in his vertue, which is peaceable and quiet and makes no disturbance; so he enjoys the solid fruits of it, in a durable, and immovable felicity.

26. *As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the slug-gard to them that send him.*

the eyes, than a remiss and negligent minister is to him that employs him, and relies upon him in a weighty business.

27. *The fear of the LORD prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.*

wickedness generally (both by its own nature and by God's righteous judgment) brings men to an untimely end.

28. *The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.*

expectedly undone? for this is another difference between a good man and a bad; that the hope of the former concludes in a joyfull possession of what he waits for: but the other, failing of his expectation, ends his days in sadness, and sorrow.

24. Yet there is none so wicked but he is sometime afraid; and, since this will not amend him, he

25. Though the wicked, like a whirlwind, may bluster terribly, and overthrow all that stands

26. Vinegar is not more offensive to the teeth, nor smoke more vexatious to

27. The best way to prolong life is religiously to observe the Laws of God: but

28. And what a lamentable case is a wicked man in, when he finds himself un-

29. *The way of the LORD is strength to the upright: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.*

29. Whence it follows also that a faithful observance of the rules of vertue, which the Lord hath prescribed us, inspires the upright man with great courage and undaunted resolution, when any evil threatens him: but the workers of iniquity, being weak and feeble spirited, are terribly shaken, nay broken, with the fear of that destruction which is coming on them.

30. *The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.*

30. There is no way like Piety, Justice, and Mercy, to establish a family in perpetual prosperity; But the wicked (how successful soever they may be for a time) shall not be able to settle themselves and their posterity, in the good land, which God hath given us.

31. *The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out.*

31. The very discourse of a righteous man is so profitable to instruct others in Wisdom, and Goodness, that it shall be a means to perpetuate him, like a fruitful tree, in a flourishing condition: but he that uses his tongue perversly, to abuse, cozen, or raise dissensions among his neighbours, shall be cut down, like a tree that combers the ground.

32. *The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable; but the mouth of the wicked speaketh frowardness.*

32. The righteous knows very well, how to speak those things (and accustoms his mouth unto them) which are grateful to men, and yet not displeasing to Almighty God: But the wicked are odious to both; because they are skilled altogether in lying and flattery, fraud and calumny, and such like subtle, but detestible, arts of doing mischief.

C H A P. XI.

A R G U M E N T.

This Chapter consists of many promiscuous observations, concerning such things as will make men happy or miserable. It begins with an Admonition concerning Justice in our dealings one with another: without which Society (which God designs and takes a special care to uphold) cannot be preserved. And mankind being very apt to be regardless what they doe, towards God or towards man, when they grow rich and great; he next gives a caution against Pride and Insolence, as a certain forerunner of ruin. For it consisting in forgetfulness of God, confidence in mens selves, despising others, slighting good counsels, and attempting things out of the bounds of mens place and calling (all which proceed from stupid folly) naturally leads men headlong into destruction.

Then he commends sincerity and charity (v. 3, 4.) and represents the vast difference between Vertue and Wickedness; in order to mens private safety (v. 5, 6, &c.) and to the publick security (v. 10, 11.) After which follow a great many prudent observations and advices, for mens private, and for the common good: with such remarks upon sundry vertues and vices, as are sufficient to invite to the one, and deter from the other.

[a] *Among the rest there is one, v. 21. (translated thus by us, though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished) upon which there are as many glosses almost, as there are Interpreters. But I have onely put together those two senses of the former part of the verse, which are most agreeable to the latter; and do not think fit to trouble the Reader with the other, any further than merely to inform him of this one thing. That most Interpreters by hand in hand understand the hands*

hands of divers persons : but some few take it, for the hands of one and the same person, who puts one hand into the other. And these last named, make the sence one of these two ways : either that though a sinner indeavour to hide his sin (as a man doth a thing which he holds in one hand and covers with the other) he shall notwithstanding be found out and suffer for it ; or that, though wicked men doe nothing, but like an idle person have their hands folded one in the other, yet they are not free from sin; which they are devising in their mind, and will draw a just vengeance upon them.

[b] In the next verse I have followed Bochartus (de Animal. S. Part I. L. II. C. 57.) in his translation of those two words מַעַן בְּרַחֲמֶיהָ which he renders her mind departeth, viz. from the love of her husband : but I have not neglected the other sence of which I think those words are capable.

[c] In the 29 verse I have adhered to the opinion of the Lord Bacon (Book VIII. of the Advanc. of Learning, Ch. 2. Parab. 9.) “ who takes it for a profitable admonition touching discords in families and domestick breaches (but may as well be applied to whole kingdoms, which are larger families) which whosoever cherishes among his children or servants (or people) as a means to have his affairs better administred, when they have an evil eye upon, and hate one another ; commonly finds his hopes turn into wind. For those alterations and changes, for the most part, succed ill : and those disturbers of their own families oftentimes meet with vexations and ingratitude from those very persons, whom (passing by others) they adopt as the objects of their special favour : Nay by this means, they draw upon themselves ill reports and doubtfull rumours : for it is not ill observed by Cicero, That all reports, both good and bad fame, come from domesticks. Which two evils (he thinks) Solomon expresses by inheriting the wind :

for

for the frustrating of expectations and raising of rumours are rightly compared unto winds. I have added in the Paraphrase two other things belonging to wind; which makes a great noise, and leaves nothing behind it: for all make it an emblem of emptiness.

[d] The last verse is a wise consideration suggested to good men, when they are under the oppressions of the wicked: that if the just be afflicted (as Melancthon glosses) who seriously endeavour amendment of life, God will take a time to reckon with those lewd men, who contumaciously and furiously persist in their wickedness. So the wise man (says he) admonishes us of two things. First that the Church is subject to the Cross, which the cruelty of Tyrants may lay upon it: but secondly those Tyrants must one day answer for their cruelty by sharp punishments upon themselves; Nay, though they flourish for some time, at last, says he, they are shaken out of their empires. Hitber he applies those known words of the Poet, Ad generum Cereris sine cade, &c.

1. **A** False balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight.

be onely in a little matter) but extremely hatefull and detestable to the great Lord and Governour of the world: as on the other side, exactly just and equal dealing in all our commerce one with another, is highly pleasing to him.

2. When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.

the folly of this appears, in drawing along with it that contempt and disgrace, which above all things such men would avoid: therefore be humble and modest; the wisdom of which is manifest, from the universal respect which it gains every-where.

1. **I**T is not so small a sin as men imagine, to cheat their neighbours (though it

2. Do not entertain an haughty conceit of thy self, nor insult over others; for

3. *The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.*

3: The integrity of those that uprightly observe the rules of virtue, is their highest prudence, and safest guide, through all manner of difficulties and dangers: but the crafty wiliness of perfidious men, who will be tied unto no Laws, is mere folly; and shall be so far from preserving them, that it shall prove their certain destruction.

4. *Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.*

4: Heaps of wealth, amassed by extortion or covetousness, shall as little avail, as subtilty and cunning, when God in his righteous displeasure shall punish the world by a common calamity: But Justice, accompanied with Mercy (as hath been observed already, X. 2.) will befriend him that hath constantly practised them, and rescue him even when there is no hope of safety [See XXIX. *Ecclus.* 11, 12, 13. and XL. 24.]

5. *The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.*

5: Remember this (and be not nauseated at the repetition of it, for it is a weighty Truth) that there is no surer guide to direct men in the plain way to safety, or any other good, than a sincere and impartial observance of all God's Laws: but that the wicked shall perish, by those very impious courses (of lyes, suppose, breach of promises, perjuries, and oppression) whereby they think to greaten or to secure themselves.

6. *The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness.*

6: Remember it, I say, (for it cannot be too often inculcated) that the virtue of unfeignedly and intirely upright men, shall be their preservative when they are in danger: but they that are governed wholly by their own depraved desires and interests, shall be intangled and inevitably perish in their own naughty contrivances.

7. *When*

7. *When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust men perisheth.*

7. Do not imagine therefore that they have the advantage of others, who are

loose from all Laws. They may seem so to have for the present; but, beside what I have now said, it must be considered that Death (and how suddenly doth that sometime overtake them) utterly destroys all their projects and hopes: whatsoever they expected to accomplish by their riches, or their power, or their friends, it perisheth together with them.

8. *The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.*

8. Nay, before that it is frequently seen, that a just man is unexpectedly

drawn out of those straits and difficulties wherein he was perplexed, and the wicked (who perhaps brought him into them) takes the place which he hath left; falling into those very distresses, from which the just is happily freed.

9. *An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.*

9. And more than this, a good man hath this advantage by his wisdom, that it sometimes instructs

many how to evade those snares, which the profane Hypocrite, with counterfeit professions of friendship, lays to destroy his neighbours.

10. *When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth: and when the wicked perish, there is shouting.*

10. We see also in this how amiable virtue and how hateful vice is, that the Inhabitants of a City

generally leap for joy when good men prosper and are advanced unto power: but are so far from pitying the downfall of the wicked, that they shout when they behold them tumbling from the high places to which they were raised.

11. *By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.*

11. Men of unbiassed virtue make a City flourish by the blessings they procure

for it from heaven, by their prayers, by their prudent advice, their pious admonitions, and their constant study of the publick good: but the wicked, by their blasphemies, their evil counsels, their pestilent maxims, their impious doctrines, whereby they corrupt mens manners, utterly subvert the good estate thereof.

12. *He that is void of wisdom, despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding boldeth his peace.*

him ridiculous (for no man is so mean but he is sensible of despisal, and may find ways to shew his resentment) therefore a thoroughly prudent person, whatsoever he thinks of others, saith nothing to their reproach.

13. *A tale beaver revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithfull spirit concealeth the matter.*

stick most treacherously to discover the secrets wherewith they have intrusted him: But a man whose mind is steadfastly fixed to be true and faithfull to his neighbours, will study (though they have not desired him) to hide those things, which, being known, may prove injurious to them.

14. *Where nocounsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.*

certainly as a Ship doth without a Pilot: nor is one sufficient; but then a Country is safe, when there are many wise men to govern affairs: that if one fail, there may enough still remain; or what one or two sees not, others may be able to discern.

15. *He that is surety for a stranger, shall smart for it: and he that hateth suretiship is sure.*

another man, especially of a stranger (VI. 1.) whose ability and honesty is unknown to him: And the way to be secure from that fear, is not onely to avoid such engagements ones self, but to abhor to see other men enter into them.

12. It is a great weakness to speak contemptuously of any man, or to render

13. A man whose trade it is to ingratiate himself by defaming others, will not

14. Where prudent Counsellors are wanting a Nation goes to wrack, as cer-

15. He is in great danger to be undone, who stands bound to pay the debts of ano-

16. *A gracious woman retaineth honour: and strong men retain riches.*

16. Beauty and vertue in a woman advances her to honour; as formidable strength and power in men advances them to Riches: and as their principal care is to keep their Treasures, so hers should be to preserve her Reputation.

17. *The mercifull man doeth good to his own soul: but he that is cruel, troubleth his own flesh.*

17. He that hath a heart to be kind and bountifull unto his neighbours, will have this advantage by it, among many others, that he will not deny what is fit and convenient to himself: whereas the covetous and hard-hearted, as he hath no regard to his nearest relations, so he pinches his own flesh, by his fordid way of living.

18. *The wicked worketh a deceitfull work: but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward.*

18. He thinks perhaps hereby to raise himself, or his posterity to greatness, but, like all other wicked men, will be deceived in his expectation; for the event of his actions never answers the design: but vertuous men shall infallibly reap the fruit of their pious, just and charitable labours.

19. *As righteousness tendeth to life: so he that pursueth evil, pursueth it to his own death.*

19. Thus God orders it in his Providence, and thus it is in the nature of things, that vertue tends to make men happy: but the more eagerly any man pursues an evil thing, the more he is bent upon his own destruction.

20. *They that are of a froward heart, are abomination to the LORD: but such as are upright in their way, are his delight.*

20. Of all other men they are most odious to the Lord, who pretend to justice, kindness and truth; but study and devise how to compals their ends, though it be by the wickedest means: as on the contrary, they whose exact observance of the rules of righteousness in the whole course of their lives, testifie the integrity of their hearts, are highly in his favour and love.

21. Though hand join in hand,
the wicked shall not be unpunished :
but the seed of the righteous shall be
delivered.

and confederacies, and his successors also have mighty associates to maintain his acquisitions, they shall not be able to defend themselves from the punishment their iniquity deserves: but the posterity of the righteous need not be at such pains; but, though deserted by men, escape the danger into which the other fall, by the help of God alone.
See Arg. [a]

22. As a jewel of gold in a swines
snout, so is a fair woman which is
without discretion.

ing in the mire : so is beauty ill bestowed on the body of a woman, whose mind having lost all savour and relish of vertue, carries her from her husband, to wallow in filthy lusts, and adulterous pleasures. See Arg. [b]

23. The desire of the righteous
is onely good: but the expectation
of the wicked is wrath.

wicked wish for trouble and disturbance, especially that they may execute their malice and wrath upon those whom they hate : And accordingly God will deal with them; good things shall be the portion of the righteous, but his just indignation shall frustrate the expectation of the wicked.

24. There is that scattereth, and
yet increaseth; and there is that
withholdeth more than is meet, but
it tendeth to poverty.

penurious; that you shall find here and there a man who communicates readily and liberally to the necessities of others, and yet his estate is so far from being impaired thereby, that it increases : when others, who are so saving that they will part with nothing, no not upon the most just occasions, do not thrive at all, but by one means or other become beggars.

21. Though the
wicked endeavour to
strengthen himself
and his family by
powerfull leagues

22. As a golden
ring is ill placed in
the snout of a swine,
which is always rout-

23. The righteous
desire nothing but
that it may be well
with all men; but the

24. You may see
by this how misera-
bly they are mista-
ken, who imagine
none so wise as the pe-

25. The

25. *The liberal soul shall be made fat : and he that watereth, shall be watered also himself.*

be impoverished, for it is the certain way to enrich himself: and the larger his charity is, and the more diffused for the refreshment of others, the greater abundance shall be poured on him, and the abler still shall he grow to do more good.

26. *He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him : but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.*

popular hatred; and be loaded with many a curse: but he who then opens his granaries and sells at a moderate rate, shall not onely have the peoples good word, but the blessing of God.

27. *He that diligently seeketh good, procureth favour : but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.*

both with God and man: but he whose business it is to do mischief, shall draw upon himself the evil he designs against others.

28. *He that trusteth in his riches, shall fall : but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.*

him covetous, unjust and unmercifull, shall fall to decay like a withered leaf: but they whose pious dependance upon God, makes them just and charitable, like a flourishing tree, shall thrive and prosper.

29. *He that troubleth his own house, shall inherit the wind : and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart.*

making a great bustle and stir, seem to be a notable man; but will not onely be deceived in his expectations, but desame his government, and bring his estate to nothing: say,

25. Let not him therefore that bestows benefits, imagine thereby he shall

26. He that hoardeth up corn in a time of scarcity, on purpose to raise the price, shall fall into the po-

27. He that from the time he rises, studies nothing but how to do good to others, shall obtain favour

28. He whose confidence in riches as the surest support and defence, makes

29. He that makes or cherishes dissensions and factions in his own family (or kingdom) may, by

it is oftentimes seen that he who is thus foolish, loses all his authority, and becomes a servant to him, who administers his affairs with a more prudent care. See Arg. [c]

30. *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls, is wise.* 30. The benefit the world receives from a just and charitable man is so great

that it may be compared to the fruit of the tree of life; which keeps mankind from being miserable: but he is the greatest Benefactor of all, who communicates wisdom so charitably and seasonably, that he draws souls to the love of vertue.

31. *Behold, the righteous shall be recompenced in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner.* 31. But who is there so good as to doe or to suffer no evil? And if God do

not let the just and charitable men (mark what I say) they who are so usefull and beneficial to the world go without correction; who can think that the wicked, who is good for nothing, but obstinately contemns and breaks all the Law of God and man, shall escape the just punishment of his many crimes? See 1 Pet. IV. 18. and Arg. [d]

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter begins with an Admonition, often inculcated in this Book, concerning the affection wherewith a man, that would be wise and good, ought to receive charitable reproofs. And there are several things also repeated, concerning the Providence of Almighty God; in punishing men according to their wickedness, and delivering good men from those who seek their destruction: which is notably expressed in three verses one after another, v 5. 6, 7. where he observes how the wicked labouring to compass their ends, by cozenage, or by violence, even by blood (especially if they can privately make a man away)

away) not onely miscarry in their designs, but are unexpectedly overturned, and subverted out of their places, wherein they behaved themselves with such injustice and cruelty.

There are divers Instructions also here repeated about several vertues and vices; especially, those of the tongue. Among which Melancthon commends this to the remembrance of the Reader, v. 22. [a] lying lips are an abomination to the Lord; who recommends to us, says he, the love and care of Truth; both in doctrines concerning Himself, and in Arts, and in all honest Covenants, and Contracts. For Truth being among the chiefest and most conspicuous vertues, therefore the contrary vice is condemned, by a terrible word, and called Abomination, i. e. such an evil as God detests with a singular indignation (for Idols are called βδελύματα, abominations, or abominable things) which is principally true of such lyes, as are on purpose invented to destroy mens fame; and much more of such as are devised for the taking away their lives and the ruin of their families: such as those which David often complains were contrived against him.

The Lord Bacon hath made notable remarks also upon another passage in this Chapter, v. 10. where he observes concerning the former [b] part of the verse, "that there is implanted in man's nature a noble and excellent affection of pity and compassion, called here Mercy: which extends it self even unto brute creatures, that are by divine ordination subject to his command. And therefore this compassion, hath some analogy with that of a Prince towards his subjects. Nay further, it is most certain, that the worthier any soul is, the larger is its compassion. For contracted and degenerate minds, imagine these things appertain not to them: but the mind that looks upon it self as a nobler portion of the Universe, is kindly af-

“ *sected towards inferiour creatures, out of the com-
 “ munion there is between them: wherefore we see that
 “ there were under the old Law many precepts concern-
 “ ing this, which were not so much merely ceremonial,
 “ as institutions of Mercy. As that of not eating
 “ flesh with the bloud in it, and such like. I suppose
 he means those mentioned, XXIII. Exod. 5, 19. V.
 Deut. 4. XXII. 6, 7. XXV. 4. For, as Grotius hath
 excellently observed, it is very laudable to exercise
 kindness towards brute creatures, that we may keep
 our selves the more remote, from all manner of cru-
 elty towards men. Which the Angel, the Jews think,
 reprov'd in Balaam when he chid him for striking his
 Ass three times. For thus they bring in the Angel
 speaking to him, in the great Commentary upon Num-
 bers, If I am required to demand satisfaction for
 the injury done thy Ass, concerning whom there is
 no Law of justice, nor covenant of our Fathers,
 how much more for this, that thou goest about
 utterly to root out a whole Nation?*

*I omit what the same Lord Bacon there says (Book VIII.
 of the Advanc. of Learning, C. 2. Parab. 14.) concern-
 ing the ancient Essens, and Pythagoreans, and concern-
 ing some people now in the Mogul's Country, and the
 present Turks, who are full of affection to brute crea-
 tures; and onely observe that he looks upon the latter
 part of the same verse, as a kind of caution added by the
 wise man; lest we should think he patronizes all sort of
 mercy and compassion. “ No, the mercy which spares
 “ wicked persons from being cut off by the hand of
 “ justice, is not mercy, but more cruel than cruelty it
 “ self. For cruelty is exercised upon single persons one-
 “ ly: but this kind of mercy, by the grant of impunity,
 “ arms the whole band of impious men against the inno-
 “ cent. So by the Mercies of the wicked, he under-
 stands, mercy shewn to the wicked: Which is an unusual
 form of speech, and disagreeing to the opposition which
 the*

the wise man, in this proverbial saying, makes between the righteous and the wicked. And therefore it is not to be embraced, nor to be lookt upon as a true exposition: in which though I believe he followed Drusius, yet he hath very little company besides. And the sence rather lies as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase: in which if I have added more than Interpreters do, I am confident it will appear to him, that considers, not to be without reason. For these words, the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel, seem to me to have the same sence with that proverbial speech among the Greeks, *Ἐχθρῶν δόξα ἀδωγ*.

In the twelfth verse I have expressed both senses of which the word *mezod* is capable: which signifies both a net and a fortress. And so I have done in the next (v. 13.) which may be rendred two ways. Either, that by prevaricating with his lips, a wicked man lays snares, or [c] that he is himself insnared by his prevarications. In the same manner I have comprehended more senses than one, in several other verses; which if I should particularly mention, it would enlarge this Preface beyond its just length. Else I should have made some remarks upon v. 15. where the danger of self-love and self-conceit is represented: which hath ever this effect, that it makes men slight, if not reject good counsel; out of a vain opinion, that none can advise them better than themselves: which is to follow the direction of a fool. For it is a certain note of folly to rely wholly upon a man's own judgment, as it is of prudence to hearken to the advice of others.

1. **W**Hoso loveth instruction,
loveth knowledge: but
he that hateth reproof is brutish.

1. **I**T is an excellent
sign that a man
will be wise and good,
who not onely pa-
tiently bears with those that tell him of his faults, but
loves and is thankfull for reproof: which he who not
onely declines but hates, and is thereby enraged, gives
way

way to such brutish passions and desires, that there is little hope he should ever be a man.

2. *A good man obtaineth favour of the LORD: but a man of wicked devices will be condemn.*

of the Lord upon himself: but he who contrives mischievous designs, under a specious shew of Religion and the publick good, shall be judged by Him, who knows the heart, to suffer what he deserves.

3. *A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the root of the righteous shall not be moved.*

himself and his family, who lays the foundation of his greatness in wickedness: But the righteous, like a tree that hath taken a deep root in the earth, though shaken with storms and tempests, shall remain unmoveable in a flourishing estate.

4. *A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed, is as rottenness in his bones.*

own passions and desires, is a singular ornament and honour to her husband; who may well glory in his happiness: but she whose laziness, or lasciviousness, or other infamous quality, makes him hang down his head for shame, is an incurable grief, and vexation, consuming him and all that he hath.

5. *The thoughts of the righteous are right: but the counsels of the wicked are deceit.*

contrivances of the wicked are carried on with fraud, dissimulation, and all manner of deceit.

6. *The words of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood: but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.*

away secretly the life of those who stand in the way of their designs:

2. He that studies how to doe good to others attracts the good will and blessing

3. For no man though never so subtil or powerfull, shall be able to establish

4. A wife that strenuously employs herself in her domestick affairs, and can prudently command her

5. The designs of good men are managed with exact justice and truth: but the

6. Nay (such is the height of their wickedness) they consult one with another, and lay plots to take

designs: but men sincerely good give the best advice they can to deliver such innocent persons from their bloody snares.

7. *The wicked are overthrown, and are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.* 7. And God befriends them also; who not only defeats those wicked pro-

jectours in their designs, but so totally overthrows them and their families that no footstep of them remains: whereas He not onely continues, but settles the just man's family in a durable succession (as I have often said, v. 3. and X. 25, 30, XI. 35.) when they that assaulted them are quite extinct.

8. *A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised.* 8. True prudence directing a man to effect his ends by fair and honest means, will procure him the

greatest esteem, and the most lasting praise: but he who contrives by fraud, and such like crooked ways, to attain his aim, shall fall into utter contempt, and be scorned by all as a foolish knave.

9. *He that is despised, and hath a servant, is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.* 9. He is far happier who makes no shew in the world, but hath a competent estate; than he

who appears in great splendour and pomp abroad, but wants bread to eat when he is at home.

10. *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.* 10. A good man takes care that his beast be well used, and have food and rest convenient for it,

which is more than men bent upon wickedness will doe for their neighbours: For their very kindneses, being treacherous, are a cruel cheat; nay the highest expressions which they make of tenderness and compassion (whereby they induce others to repose a trust in them) are intended merely as a cover, for the mischief they mean more securely to do them. See Arg. [b].

11. *He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain persons, is void of understanding.*

him with sufficient, if not plentiful, provision for himself and his family: but he that is idle, falling into the company of loose and wicked persons, will find at last (by the desperate courses into which they will lead him) that he wants not onely bread, but understanding.

12. *The wicked desireth the net of evil men: but the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit.*

wiles and arts of deceiving; and then to be secure in his wickedness: but the righteous make every body the better for them; and thereby enjoy that safety, which the other have onely in their wishes and desires.

13. *The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips: but the just shall come out of trouble.*

have insnared others: but the righteous escapes the danger; nay, by his prudent discourse avoids very great difficulties wherein otherways he might have been intangled. See Arg. [c].

14. *A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth, and the recompence of a mans hands shall be rendred unto him.*

fruit of it abundantly himself: and there is no good work he doth for the benefit of others, but God will requite it, and make it turn to his own good account.

15. *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel, is wise.*

ever he doth, in his own opinion he is always in the right: but a wise man will not rely upon his own judgment a-

11. He that takes pains in an honest employment, suppose in tilling his land, shall find it requite

12. The wicked desires two things, first to doe as much mischief as he can by his

13. The wicked insnares himself by that deceitfull talk, where-with he designed to

14. There is no man gives good counsel and advice (especially in publick affairs) but he shall reap the

15. A fool is so conceited that he consults no body but himself; for whatso-

alone;

lone; but, suspecting himself, makes use of the sound advice of other men.

16. *A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame.* 16. A fool (like a beast) is no sooner provoked but he grows angry; and, which is worse, it appears immediately in his countenance, words and actions: whereas a prudent man is not unseemly transported by his passion; but stifles his resentments, even of the most reproachfull injuries that are done him.

17. *He that speaketh truth, sheweth forth righteousness; but a false witness, deceit.* 17. He that freely and boldly speaks the truth and all the truth, and nothing but the truth, demonstrates himself an honest man and doth justice unto others: but he that conceals the truth or forges falsehoods, and testifies unto lyes, declares himself both a deceitfull and mischievous person.

18. *There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.* 18. A cut-throat is not more pernicious than he; and they are not much better, whose business it is by secret calumnies to wound the reputation of their neighbours, or to make discords and divisions among them: which a good man uses all his skill to cure; perswading them to love, unity and peace.

19. *The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment.* 19. He that speaks the truth (being always conformable to himself) hath this advantage, that he can never be disproved, nor consequently discredited: but a liar, though he may at present be believed, is soon confuted; for he is apt to contradict himself and blast his own reputation for ever.

20. *Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace is joy.* 20. They do but deceive themselves, who look for any satisfaction from dissensions and disturbances; which they cannot contrive without much fear and anxiety of mind: but, as they are always

always cheerfull who consult nothing but peace, concord, and happy settlement, so they will have great joy, whatsoever the issue be, of such good designs.

21. *There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.*

21. For the divine Providence takes a peculiar care of good men, to avert the harm that the iniquity of the wicked intends them: which shall fall upon themselves in such abundance as to overwhelm them.

22. *Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight.*

22. It is thought no great matter, if a man break his word, or any way deceive his neighbour; but know, that this is a thing exceeding hateful to the Divine Majesty: and on the contrary they that faithfully perform their promises, and in all things deal truly with their neighbours, are no less acceptable to Him. See Arg. [4].

23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.*

23. A prudent man conceals his knowledge, and will not make a shew of being so wise as really he is: but a fool publishes his ignorance, as if he was ambitious that every one should know he is a fool.

24. *The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.*

24. He that taketh pains in an honest employment, shall take his ease at last; may raise himself to dominion and power; but he whose sloth makes him live by thieving and deceit, shall bring that toil upon himself which he would avoid; when his poverty and villainy have reduced him to be a slave.

25. *Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.*

25. Anxious cares and solicitude how to live depress the spirit of a man, otherwise magnanimous: but the kind and encouraging discourses of a Friend (much more the gracious promises of God) erect it, may make it glad.

26. *The*

26. *The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour : but the way of the wicked seduceth them.*

doth not delude himself with vain hopes ; nor miss his end, as the wicked doth in all his designs.

27. *The slothfull man roasteth not that which he took in hunting : but the substance of a diligent man is precious.*

not be able to keep his prey : but he is a valuable man, who by honest diligence getteth wealth ; which shall durably remain with him.

28. *In the way of righteousness is life ; and in the path-way thereof there is no death.*

one action of vertue that tends to make a man miserable ; as all manner of wickedness doth.

26. As in other things, so in this, a righteous man is more excellent than his neighbour, that he

27. There is nothing more vile than a lazy fellow that lives by cheating ; who, if he catch, shall

28. True goodness leads unto endless prosperity and happiness : nor is there any

CHAP. XIII.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter begins, as the foregoing did, with an Admonition about receiving instruction and reproof with due regard to them ; especially from Parents, who cannot be thought to intend any thing, but the good of their Children.

And as he did there, so here again the Wise man gives fresh advice about the government of the tongue, about diligence and industry : and hath several observations, not much different from what he made before, of the advantage which the Righteous have of the

the Wicked in a great many instances, which are easie to observe in the Paraphrase.

And in the eighth verse he seems to me to teach [a] contentedness of mind; by shewing that the poor have a great advantage of the rich in an evil time. Some indeed take the sentence quite otherways, as if the Wise man intended to represent the great advantage rich men have of the poor, in this sence; a rich man, when he fears any evil from his enemies, can divert it by a sum of money: but a poor man when he is threatened, dare not stay, but runs away. And others there are who go a middle way, and think he intends to shew, that each of them have their advantages of several kinds. But considering the opposition that is usual in this Book, between one part of the verse and the other; this seems not to be the meaning: yet I have mentioned it, that they who do not take the opposition to lie as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase, may have their choice, and follow which sence they like best. As for that of Clemens Alexandrinus L. III. Pædagog. Cap. 7. who thus glosses upon the former part of the verse, ἐὰν πλὴν μὴ ἀδύνατον σωθῆσθαι, if a man be rich, he shall be saved by giving away to those in want; it doth not answer to the opposite part of the verse; unless we should interpret it thus: as for the poor, they shall have no rebuke for not giving, because they have nothing to give. But I look upon this as not genuine; though his Admonition upon this occasion be excellent, which is this: He that earnestly presses to go up to heaven must καλὴ βασιλείαν τὴν εὐεργεσίαν περιφέρειν, carry about with him that good staff of beneficence, and by relieving those that are afflicted, partake himself of true rest and refreshment.

*Which it is impossible to find any way but in [b] vertuous courses, as the fifteenth verse suggests to us; the sence of which according to the plain import of the Hebrew words, I have expressed in the Paraphrase. But as
the*

the last part of it sounds in our language it will not be incongruous, to take the meaning of the whole thus: If a man have understanding enough to be thoroughly good, he will find things favourable to his honest desires; but they that take evil courses meet with great difficulties, and are forced to go backward and forward, and wind and turn every way, to bring about their ends, or save themselves perhaps from ruin.

[c] There are several other notable sentences in this Chapter; upon which, if I should enlarge it would be to write a Book. The onely two which Melancthon singled out for the observation of his Scholars, are the one of them in v. 10. concerning pride. Upon which he remembers them of the Greek proverb, *ὄρεσιν ὄρεσιν ἔμικται*, A mountain cannot mix with a mountain, i.e. two high men will never agree together: and of another excellent saying among the Latins, *Crede mihi, sapere, est non multum sapere*, Believe me, to be wise, is not to be over wise. For they whose minds are infected with a vain opinion of themselves, either cannot see the truth, if it be against their thoughts; or if they do, they will not acknowledge it, for fear they should yield and confess themselves overcome.

[d] The other is v. 23. the latter part of which he renders differently from all that I have read; there is much food in the furrows of the poor, & all is sine modo cumulant; and others heap up without any measure, that is, to no purpose, when a little will suffice. Which is a wise saying, but not agreeable to the Hebrew Text.

I shall onely add that as the Chapter begins with an Admonition to hearken to reproof (especially from Parents) which is repeated again in the middle, v. 12, 18. so it concludes, [e] in the last verse but one, with an advice to Parents; not to spare the rod, if reproof will not do: which is but necessary in very young Children; because there is no other means perhaps to make them under-stand

derstand the difference between good and evil, desent and unseemly; but onely to make them smart for the one, and to give them some sensible pleasure for the other. Some Children, that is, are so disposed, that they must be thus treated: and it seems a wonderfull piece of wisdom in the old Lacedæmonians (as Plutarch relates in his Laconical Institutes) that, out of an universal love and care for each others good, made it lawfull for any man to correct the Child of another person, if he saw him doe amiss. And if the Child complained of it to his Father; it was lookt upon as a fault in the Father if he did not correct him again for making that complaint. Such was their confidence in each other, that every man being as much concerned for another man's Children as for his own, would never doe them any injury, nor unreasonably check them without cause. For this is the Character Plutarch gives of them; that they did not as in other cities, look every man onely after his own children, servants and cattel; but every man lookt upon what was his neighbour's as his own, ὅπως ὅτι μέλιστα κοινὸν αὐτοῖς καὶ φροντισόμενοι ὡς ἰδίον, that there might be, as much as was possible, a communion among them, and they might take care of what belonged to others, as if they were their own proper goods.

1. **A** Wise son heareth his fathers instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke.

and the reprehension of his Father: but there is no hope of him, that laughs and scoffs, when he is admonished or chidden for his faults.

2. *A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth: but the soul of the transgressours shall eat violence.*

benefit thereof himself: and so shall they that perfidiously calumniate or deceive them, suffer themselves that injury which they desired to doe their neighbours,

1. **A** Good Child will reverently receive and obey, both the instruction

2. He that speaks well of others, or gives them faithfull counsel, shall reap the

3. He

3. *He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips, shall have destruction.*

speaks, preserves himself from much trouble and danger: but he that blurts out every thing that comes into his head; not minding what he saith, is in the ready way to ruin.

4. *The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.*

will not labour for them: but the diligent and industrious shall never want satisfaction, but enjoy perhaps a great deal more than he desired.

5. *A righteous man hateth lying: but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame.*

word and deed: but the wicked delights to abuse others with such abominable lyes and and frauds, as make him no less loathsome than a stinking carcase; and so contemptible, that he dare not shew his face for shame.

6. *Righteousness keepeth him that is upright in the way: but wickedness overthroweth the sinner.*

ed contrivances are overthrown by their own iniquity.

7. *There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.*

have the vanity to make a great show in the world, when they are not worth a farthing: and others, who are so cunning as to dissemble their vast estates under the garb of poverty.

4. It is worth a man's pains to watch over his tongue; for he that carefully observes every word he

4. There is nothing gotten by sloth, neither riches, nor learning; which he in vain desires that

5. A good man not only avoids but hates all manner of falsehood, both in

6. The justice of all honest and upright designs will be a sufficient security to them: but all wick-

7. You will be deceived, if you judge of men by the outward appearance; for there are those, who

8. *The ransom of a man's life are his riches: but the poor heareth not rebuke.*

8. Rich men are not always so happy as they are imagined; for their wealth sometimes onely serves to make them accused of high crimes, and then to bring them off with a huge sum of money, which they pay to save their lives: but no body is apt to find fault with the poor, or to bring any charge against them. See Arg. [d].

9. *The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.*

9. The happiness of the just is great and illustrious, like the light of the sun; and increases still to their endless joy: but the happiness of the wicked, is weak and dim, like the light of a candle; and will at last be utterly extinguished.

10. *Onely by pride cometh contention: but with the well-advised is wisdom.*

10. They that have an high conceit of themselves and will yield to none, declare their folly; in that they can do nothing without strife and contention: but they that are so humble as to be advised by others, do all things prudently, in quietness and peace. See Arg. [e].

11. *Wealth gotten by vanity, shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour, shall increase.*

11. Wealth ill gotten (by lying, gaming, cheating, &c.) soon waits away: but what is gotten by honest labour swells to a greater heap, which moulders not but still increases.

12. *Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.*

12. The delay of that which a man eagerly expects is such an affliction, that it differs little from a lingering disease: but when he enjoys what he hath long looked for, it restores him presently to his former vigour and liveliness.

13. *Whoso despiseth the word, shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the word, shall be preserved.*

13. He that despises the good admonitions or counsels that are

eth the commandment, shall be re- are given him, is his
warded. own enemy, and de-
stroy himself: but he

that reverently submits to the divine commandment makes
God his Friend, who will reward him for it.

14. *The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.* 14. The Instructions of a good man ought to be as a Law to him that receives

them; for like the water of a perpetual spring, they are most beneficial: especially to preserve him from those pernicious and destructive principles whereby too many are insinared.

15. *Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard.* 15. A prudent, pious and regular behaviour, is most amiable and acceptable to

all men: but the conversation of such as live by no law but their own lusts, like rough way, is grievously uneasy. See Arg. [6].

16. *Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open his folly.* 16. All prudent persons are so cautious not to discredit themselves, that they

undertake nothing but with due deliberation, and what they understand: but a fool discovers his weakness to be greater than was thought, by rash meddling with matters out of his reach.

17. *A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithfull ambassador is health.* 17. A Messenger, or a Minister, that wickedly betrays his trust is so injurious to

(his Prince or) him that employs him, that he shall not escape a just punishment: but he that faithfully dischargeth this Office (healing suppose, or preventing differences and breaches) procures safety to himself, as well as to the person that used his service.

18. *Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction:* 18. He that proudly rejects instruction, and disdains to be

checkt

but he that regardeth reproof, shall be honoured. checkt in his lewd courses, is likely to be a beggar, and exposed to the publick scorn: but he that is so humble as to give a due regard to reproof, and to correct his errors, not onely gains a just esteem, but is likely to rise unto dignity and honour.

19. The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul: but it is abomination to fools to depart from evil.

in defeat themselves; being so wedded to their wickedness, that they will not quit it, if that must be the condition of their being so happy.

19. It is an high satisfaction to enjoy what we earnestly desire: but fools here-

20. He that walketh with wise men, shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

that is, to be happy: but he who associates himself with the wicked, shall be as certainly ruin'd, as he will be unavoidably infected with their wickedness.

20. He that keeps company with wise and good men is likely to be so himself;

21. Evil pursueth sinners: but to the righteous, good shall be repaid.

and the good which righteous men doe, will infallibly return into their own bosome, and reward them with many blessings.

21. The wickedness of sinners pursues them to their unavoidable destruction:

22. A good man leaveth an inheritance to his childrens children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.

many generations: but the wealth of him, who regards nothing but his own small lusts and pleasures, shall be transferred from his Family unto one that is truly vertuous.

22. A man that doth good with his estate, takes the surest course to settle it upon his posterity for

23. Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment.

23. A poor man, many times, makes a plentiful provision for himself and his Family,

Family, out of a few acres of Land ; which he manages judiciously and honestly : but there is a sort of men, whose larger estates are wasted ; either for want of skill to improve their ground, or because they do not pay the hireling his wages. See Arg. [d].

24. *He that spareth his rod, hateth his son : but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.*

24. Fond affection, which makes a Parent forbear to chastise his Child for the faults

that cannot otherways be amended, is no better than hatred ; for it helps to undo him : therefore he that truly loves his child must not be so indulgent ; but as soon as ill inclinations begin to appear, while he is tender and flexible, give him early correction as well as admonition, before he have accustomed himself to the doing evil. See Arg. [e].

25. *The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want.*

25. A righteous man never wants satisfaction, because his desires are moderate,

and he lives in a temperate use of God's blessings : but wicked men, some of them bring themselves to extreme poverty, by their luxury and riot ; and others of them are indigent even in the midst of the greatest abundance ; because their desires are insatiable, and they never think they have enough.

CHAP. XIV.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *As the foregoing Chapter began with a description of a rowardy child, so this with the Character of a good Mother of a family: who by her prudent care makes it flourish; when a lewd woman throws the house (as we say) out of the windows: for so the wise man observes, She pulls down the house with her own hands, that is, ruins the family without any other help. There needs no more than a bad wife to undo a family.*

[b] *A little after this (v. 4.) there follows an Admonition for the man without doors, as here for the woman within; that he do not neglect his husbandry. Of which Oxen, every one knows, were the principal instruments: being not onely employed in that Country (as they are here) in plowing the ground, and carrying home the crop; but also in treading out the corn. The strength also of the Ox (which is here mentioned) is celebrated in all Authors: and thence Bulls are called Abbarim, i. e. robust, among the Hebrews; who were very careful about the breeding of these most profitable creatures. It is not my business to inquire after the difference between Alaphim and Sor (which we render here, in this Verse, by the same English word) but certain it is, they are used promiscuously for either sex; and the latter without any respect to age: though most commonly it signifies one grown to maturity, which we call an Ox.*

[c] *Upon the next Verse but one (v. 6.) the Lord Bacon (in his VII. Book of the Adv. of Learning, Chap. 2.) hath made this usefull gloss, He that comes to seek after knowledge, with a mind to scorn and censure, shall be sure to find matter enough for his humour, but none for his instruction. One reason of which is, that this humour of deriding all things, springs from a great pride and conceit of their own wit, which disposes them to seek for Wisdom not from others, but wholly from themselves: and so (as the Wise man observes) they are not likely to find it, where it is not to be had. When he that attributes less to himself, and hath the humility to listen to instruction, in a short time attains great wisdom. I cannot wholly omit the opinion of Jansenius; who thinks the Wise man means, that he who hath accustomed himself to laugh at all wholesome counsel, and in some streight or other begins to think what is best to doe, commonly finds himself at such a loss, that he cannot see his way out of it. And it may be applied to those*

those also, who having mockt at Religion all their days, at last desire to understand it; but cannot, through their own inveterate indisposition to it.

[d] In the next Verse I have joyned those two senses together, which it may have according to the different acception of the word Minneged signifying either before, or from before.

[e] The next (v 8.) I take to be that, which the Lord Bacon, minding the sense rather than the words, thus translates (Advancement of Learning B. VIII. C. 2. Parab. 30. Prudens advertit ad gressus suos, stultus divertit ad dolos. which his English translator (who refers this to XXVII. Prov. 12. which is quite to another purpose) reads thus, A wise man is wary of his way, a cunning fool seeks evasions. Upon which that Lord thus descants: " There be two sorts of Wisdom, " the one true and sound, the other counterfeited and " false: which last Solomon doubts not to call folly. " He that applies himself to the former, takes heed " to his own ways and footings, foreseeing dangers, studying remedies, using the assistance of good men, and " fortifying himself against the wicked: wary how he " enters upon a business; and not unprepared for a retreat, and how he may come off handsomely: attent " upon advantages, courageous against impediments, with " innumerable other things, that relate to the government of his own ways and actions. But that " other kind of Wisdom is made up altogether of fallacies, and cunning devices; and relies wholly upon " hopes of circumventing others, and framing them " as he list himself. This Wisdom the Parable rejects " not onely as wicked, but as foolish. For first, it is " not in the number of things, which are in our own power, nor is it directed by any constant rule; but new stratagems must be every day devised, the old failing and " growing uselesse. And, secondly, as soon as ever a man " hath

" hath got the name, and the opinion of a cunning crafty companion, he hath deprived himself utterly of the principal instrument for the management of his affairs, which is Trust: And so he will find by experience all things to go cross to his desires. For, lastly, these arts and shifts, how ever they promise fair, and much please such as practise them, yet they are commonly frustrated, and which is worse, end sadly. Which Tacitus hath well observed in these remarkable words, *Consilia callida & audacia, expectatione lata, tractatu dura, eventu tristia.* " Crafty and audacious counsels, are joyfull in the expectation, difficult in the management, and sad in the event.

[f] There is the same difficulty in the 9th verse that was in the seventh: For the word *Jaliz* is translated by some mock, by others excuse: and so (besides what I have comprehended in my Paraphrase) there may be this sence of the words; Fools endeavour to make handsome apologies for their faults, and to find out colourable excuses; but upright men freely confess them, and easily grant a pardon for them, and make up the difference which they raise in a friendly manner. Or if we retain the acception of mocking, this may be the sence of the verse; Fools laugh and jeer at those who have committed a sin: but good men pity them, and by kind reproofs seek their amendment. I know not how otherwise to make out the opposition, which is usual between one part of the verse and the other, unless we chuse to take it thus; That when fools offend God in the highest manner, they make nothing of it: but if good men in the least offend, they presently beg his pardon and seek his grace and favour. The former part of the sentence also may be inverted, and make this plain obvious sence; which is as natural as any: Sin will expose those to scorn, who are so foolish as to commit it: and then the latter part is as plain: But the upright will have favour both with God and man. *A good*

good Admonition to them that make a mock of sin ; which will in time make a mock of them, and expose them as ridiculous fools.

[g] Some take the next (verse 10.) to be an Admonition to a prudent man, that he should conceal both his grief and his joy; and keep them to himself. But it is rather an advice to every one, not to censure too heavily the passions of grief or of joy in others; because the causes of them may be unknown to us. Or we may look upon the former part of the Verse, as an admonition to those that are at ease; not to censure too severely the complaints of those that are in pain or trouble: and the latter part as an admonition to such as are delivered from trouble, to be more thankfull than any one can exhort them to be, because they best know what reason they have for it.

[h] The next Verse but one (v. 12.) is the only sentence which Melancthon points out to his Scholars, as most remarkable in this Chapter. Which he takes to be an Admonition of the weakness and blindness of mens judgment, and all humane counsels: which mistake lamentably, and lead men frequently into ruin. According to that saying of Simonides *ἐὸν δὲν βούλεται τὸ ἀλθινοῦν*, shows and seeming appearances do violence to Truth, Or truth is forced to give way to the more show of it: and that other, *οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν ἡ ἀλήθεια* i. Nas, shadows too oft cheat us of the reality. Against which there is no remedy, but the word of God, and invoking his direction: according to such sayings as these, Thy word is a light to my feet, &c. Commit thy way unto the Lord, and trust in him, and he will bring it to pass. This shall be your wisdom, to walk in my precepts, Deut. IV.

[i] And as some are deceived by their own counsels, so others by the counsel of flatterers; if they be so simple as to believe every one that pretends to kindness, v. 15. Where Bochartus notes very appositely, that as prudence without simplicity degenerates into craft: so simplicity

city without prudence, is no better than mere fatuity.

[k] In like manner the wise man observes, v. 23. that talking without doing is vain; and to no purpose; but onely to be a cover perhaps for Idleness. As the Lord Bacon. (Advanc. of Learning, B. VIII. C. 11. Parab. 28.) glosses upon that Verse in these words: "Solomon here separates the fruit of the labour of the tongue, and of the labour of the hands, as if want was the revenue of the one, and wealth the revenue of the other. For it commonly comes to pass, that they who talk liberally, boast much, and promise mighty matters, are beggars; and receive no benefit by their brags or by any thing they discourse of. Nay, rather for the most part such men are not industrious and diligent in their employment; but onely feed and fill themselves with words, as with wind. Certainly as the Poet says, Qui silet, est firmus, He that is conscious to himself of proficiency in his endeavours, contents himself with inward applause in his own breast, and holds his peace: but he who knows within himself that he onely hunts after vain glory, and hath nothing else to live upon, talks abundantly, and reports wonders unto others.

There are several other remarkable things in the rest of the Chapter; but this Preface is already so long, that I shall onely touch upon one, verse 34.

[l] Where they seem to me to have translated the Hebrew most exactly, who take the word Chesed in the ordinary sense of it, for mercy or clemency; not for reproach, which it never signifies unless, perhaps, once, Lev.

XX. 17. of which there may be a just doubt made. As for the Chattaah, no body doubts but it signifies a sin-offering, as well as sin; yet, with respect to our translation, I have endeavoured to express both senses of those two words in my Paraphrase.

1. **E**very wise woman buildeth
her house; but the foolish
plucketh it down with her hands.

wife; for she alone by her diligence and prudent administration, is able to raise her family, and increase its riches and reputation: But she that is foolish, and void of goodness, by her negligence, ill management, and luxury, without any other assistance, will lay it low, and waste all that hath been gotten by her predecessors care. See Arg. [a].

2. He that walketh in his up-
rightness, feareth the LORD:
but he that is perverse in his ways,
despiseth him.

to the Lord; from which all virtue flows: but he that cares not what he doth, so he do but satisfy his own lusts and passions, lives in a profane contempt of his Majesty; which is the very fountain of all wickedness.

3. In the mouth of the foolish is
a rod of pride: but the lips of the
wise shall preserve them.

tion of others, though it come home at last, with a terrible back blow, upon himself: but wise men are careful of their words, not to offend, much less abuse, the meanest person; and thereby they remain in safety.

4. Where no Oxen are, the crib
is clean: but much increase is by the
strength of the Ox.

good husbandry bestowed upon them, makes great plenty. See Arg. [b].

5. A faithfull witness will not lye:
but a false witness will utter lies.

either for fear or favour, to justify the least untruth: but a man of no conscience, who hath accustomed himself to lying, cares not how many falsehoods he testifies; which he utters without any difficulty.

1. **H**E hath a great
Treasure, who-
soever he be, that hath
a wife and virtuous

2. He that sincere-
ly discharges his duty
in all the actions of
his life, hath a due re-
gard and reverence

3. A fool is so in-
solent that he bold-
ly calumniates and
wounds the reputa-
tion of others,

4. If the fields lie
fallow and be negle-
cted, a famine must
needs follow: but

5. A person of in-
tegrity will not be
prevailed withall, ei-

6. A

6. *A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth.*

6. He that scoffs and jeers at every thing he reads or hears would be thought wise; but loses all his pains, which perhaps he takes, to be so: When a serious person, who doth not think himself too wise to learn, easily and quickly attains the knowledge of things necessary, and usefull for him. See Arg. [c].

7. *Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.*

7. Observe a fool (and a wicked man is no better) as diligently as thou pleasest, and thou shalt never learn any good from him: and therefore it is best to flee the company of such persons, whose discourse thou perceivest tends to nothing but vice and mischief. See Argument [d].

8. *The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit.*

8. The greatest cunning and subtilty that a truly wise and good man studies, is to understand what he ought to doe, and what to avoid, upon all occasions: but all the skill of wicked men, such is their folly, lies in cheating tricks, and in devising arts of circumvention and deceit. See Arg. [e].

9. *Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour.*

9. Lewd men, as if it were but a sport, care not what injury they do their neighbours, and when they have done, laugh at those that talk to them of making satisfaction: but among men exactly vertuous there is nothing but good will, which makes them live without offence, or presently reconcile themselves to those they have offended. See Arg. [f].

10. *The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.*

10. No body can know what another suffers, so well as he himself: and he alone is privy to the greatness of that joy, which springs from the happy conclusion of his sufferings. See Arg. [g].

11. *The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.*

in their palaces: For, when the great and potent families of those wicked men are over-turned, the despicable family of the sincerely pious shall flourish and grow illustrious.

12. *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man: but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

thy appetite: for that makes many actions seem innocent, which in the issue prove deadly destructive. See Arg. [b].

13. *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowfull; and the end of that mirth is heaviness.*

immoderate joy is true pleasure; for it leaves the heart more heavy and sad afterwards, especially when the mind reflects upon it: Nay, such is the vanity of this present life, there is no joy without a mixture of sorrow; which oft-times treads so close upon its heels, that it immediately follows.

14. *The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.*

to have adhered, shall bring upon himself misery enough, by his own devices: But a truly good man is, even in this, far superiour to him, that, though he should suffer, his own integrity and the clearness and quietness of his conscience, gives him abundant satisfaction.

15. *The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.*

friends who make profession of it, and easily to follow every ones advice: for a prudent man is suspicious, and proceeds cautiously; examining, before he trust; and considering well, before he doe as he is advised. See Arg. [c].

11. Men of sincere integrity are happier in a mean cottage, than the wicked are

12. Examine every thing strictly and impartially, and be not led merely by

13. Do not think that every one that laughs is merry, or that profuse and im-

14. He that, to avoid a danger, revolts from those virtuous courses, unto which he knows he ought

15. It is a mark of great silliness to be credulous; that is, to take all those for

16. *A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rogeth, and is confident.*

ing admonished of his error, and of his danger, is afraid of incurring the divine displeasure; and instantly starts back from that evil way, into which he was entering, or wherein he was engaged: but a fool storms at those that would stop him in his course, and proceeds boldly and securely to his own ruin.

17. *He that is soon angry, deal-eth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.*

17. He whose anger is presently kindled, and breaks out when he is offended, may do such things, when the fit is upon him, as none but a fool would be guilty of; but he is nothing so bad as him, who, suppressing his wrath, lets it boil in his breast, and deliberately contrives how to take a cruel revenge: for most men are inclined to pity the weakness of him that is hasty, but this mans wickedness is odious, and execrable unto all.

18. *The simple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.*

of it: but they who are cautious and advised will heartily embrace all the means of Instruction, and endeavour to arrive at the perfection of knowledge; which will prove a singular ornament and glory to them.

19. *The evil bow before the good: and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.*

19. Evil doers had best not be insolent in their prosperity; for they may not only be brought low, but have been seen to humble themselves before the face of those good men, whom they had oppressed: the most impious of them, that stuck at nothing which would support them in their wickedness, have been forced to wait as humble supplicants at the gate of that just man (whom they despised and abused) and implore his favour, and relief.

20. *The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends.*

20. There is little sincere kindness left in the world; for if a man fall into poverty, his near neighbour, nay, even he that professed friendship to him before, not onely forsakes him, but hates his company: but if a man grow very rich (let it be by what means it will) there are many that before took no notice of him, who will pretend to love him; nay, the greatest persons offer him their favour.

21. *He that despiseth his neighbour, sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.*

21. But let such men know that it is a greater sin than they imagine, and shall be severely punished, to overlook their poor neighbour, and deny him their charitable relief: which whosoever compassionately affords him, not onely doth a good deed, but shall be amply rewarded for it.

22. *Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.*

22. Need I tell you (when it is so known a truth) that they miss their end, and do but contrive their own ruin, who carry on mischievous designs against the innocent? But they that take the same pains to study how to doe men good, shall never fail of that bountifull reward, which is secured to them by the faithfull promise of God.

23. *In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth onely to penury.*

23. If a man take pains in any honest employment, though never so mean, it will bring him in some profit: but to spend ones time in talking onely, and perhaps boasting what he can doe, tends to nothing, but to make a man a beggar. See Arg. [k].

24. *The crown of the wise is their riches: but the foolishness of fools is folly.*

24. Riches are a singular advantage and ornament to a wise and vertuous man, who knows how to use them: but such is the folly of wicked men; that their Wealth makes them the more vile,

and onely gives them the greater means to show what senseless fools they are.

25. *A true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitfull witness speaketh lyes.* 25. An upright man will not fear to indanger himself in justifying the truth, to

save the lives of those that are falsely accused: but false and deceitfull men boldly pour out lyes and calumnies, though thereby they destroy the innocent.

26. *In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.* 26. A religious care to please the Lord in all things, gives a man the firmest reso-

lution, and the strongest confidence of security and protection in all dangers: And his children after him may flee to God for safety; and hope to fare the better for their pious father's sake.

27. *The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.* 27. There is nothing makes a man live so comfortably and happily as this

Religious care to avoid every thing offensive to his Majesty: which like a perpetual Spring, gives endless satisfaction; and diverts a man from those dangerous ways, wherein others are intangled to their utter destruction.

28. *In the multitude of people is the kings honour; but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince.* 28. The honour and splendour of a King depends upon the multitude, wealth and strength

of his Subjects; whom therefore he ought to cherish: for if they be wasted by unnecessary Wars, or forced into other Countries by oppression and unjust exactions, it proves the ruine of his Kingdom.

29. *He that is slow to wrath, is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit, exalteth folly.* 29. He declares himself to be a great man, and to abound with prudence, who

is not soon provoked to anger, by reproaches or ill usage: by which if a man be hastily inflamed, he exposes his

his folly, and makes it apparent to every body.

30. *A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy, the rottenness of the bones.*

gentle and contented mind: but envy, and such like fretfull passions, is as miserable a torment and consuming disease, as rottenness in the bones.

31. *He that oppresseth the poor, reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him, hath mercy on the poor.*

on; nay, affronts his Majesty, who hath promised to be the Defender of such helpless people: therefore whosoever hath any respect to God, will be so far from injuring, that he will shew mercy and doe good to him that is needy.

32. *The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.*

away from all his confidences, like the chaff before the wind, by the conscience of his own wickedness: but a righteous man is not dismayed in the greatest dangers; but remains steady and confident, even in death itself.

33. *Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding: but that which is in the midst of fools, is made known.*

in his own mind, till there be a fitting opportunity to doe good with it: whereas fools cannot contain themselves, but presently vent whatsoever they know, though never so small, in every company whereinto they come.

34. *Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.*

30. There is nothing conduces more to health and happiness, than a quiet,

31. He that defrauds or oppresses the poor, forgets God, who can reduce him to the same condition;

32. When a wicked man falls into calamity, his heart fails him, and he is driven

33. A prudent person makes no unreasonable demonstration of his Wisdom; but lets it lie quiet

34. Justice and Piety raise a Nation to the highest degree of prosperity and glory, espe-

especially when mercy, humanity and kindness, even unto strangers and enemies, is joyned with them: which pacifies the divine anger, and turns away many calamities; which the contrary sins bring down upon a people, till they make them vile and miserable. See Arg. [1].

35. *The kings favour is toward a wise servant: but his wrath is against him that causeth shame.* 35. A prudent and dextrous Minister of State, who understands his business, and is faithfull in it, must needs be very acceptable to his Prince: whose anger nothing more provokes, than one who regards not his Master's honour, but by his ill management, disgraces his government, and brings all things into confusion.

CH A P. XV.

A R G U M E N T.

This Chapter begins with that Aphorism, which [a] the Lord Bacon (Advancement of Learning. B. VIII. Ch. 2.) hath set in the front of all those, which he hath culled out of this Book; for an example of that sort of wisdom which is to be exercised in business, upon various occasions. And he applies it particularly to a man's behaviour towards a Prince or other great Person, when he is angry with him. "Two things," saith he, Solomon advises in this case: the one is "that an Answer be made; the other, that it be "soft. The first of which contains three precepts. "First that you beware of a sad and fullen silence; "which either charges the fault wholly upon your selves; "or impeaches your Master of injustice, as if his "ears were not open to a just defence. Secondly, "that you beware of delaying the Answer, and of "craving longer time for your defence: because that
"plainly

“plainly betrays you are devising some cunning and
“counterfeit Apology, having no present Answer.
“Thirdly that by all means an Answer be made :
“an Answer I say, not a mere confession or submissi-
“on; but with some sprinklings of an excuse let fall
“here and there. For it is not safe to bear your self
“otherways, unless you have to deal with very gene-
“rous and noble dispositions, which are rare. But
“then, this Answer (which is the second and princi-
“pal thing here advised) must be very soft and tem-
“perate, not harsh and peremptory: for that will
“make the business worse than if it had never been
“meddled with at all; and increase that wrath
“which you should study to appease.

Melancthon also, I find, in his short Lectures upon this Book, commends this Lesson very much to his Scholars: but looks upon it as a general precept for the preservation of peace, and avoiding unnecessary contentions; which arise out of pride, ambition, morosity of nature, emulation, wrath, superstition; which move men either to give ill words, or to return worse to those that are given them; endeavouring to overcome by sharpness and bitterness, not by lenity and moderation. And the truth is, the Hebrew word we translate answer, signifies as well what is first said, as the reply to it. So that Solomon here gives this caution, that we should not think it enough, not to begin strife and contention; but if others begin it, we should not continue it by rough answers: but endeavour to make an end presently, by mollifying the matter; and yield much for the common tranquility's sake. And he thinks it is a precept of the same nature, with that of Pythagoras, Stir not up fire with a sword: and commends those excellent verses of Euripides.

Δυσὶν λεγόντων, Πατέρι θυμεμένε,
 Ὁ μὲν ἀντίσείνων τῆς λόγῳ σοφώτερος.

And next to this precept he commends to his Scholars [b] that in v. 8. which is all that he glosses upon in this Chapter: And thinks it is a caution against resting in ceremonious worship, without moral vertue. Concerning which he says so many things, usefull for these present times, that I cannot but here give the sum of them.

There are three sorts of works, saith he, mentioned by the Prophets, concerning ceremonies, and concerning moral vertue, and concerning faith. For the first of these, ceremonies or external signs; God instituted some for two causes. First, that they should be signs of the promises. Secondly, that they should be the nerves of the publick Congregation: because God would not have his Church be hid in obscurity, but be conspicuous and discerned from other nations, voce & ceremoniis. But here we must prudently consider, how ceremonies are to be used; because men are prone to false worship, and especially to the abuse of ceremonies: which they take for righteousness, and think thereby to merit remission of sin: which perswasion spread it self largely among mankind, in the heathen world, among the Pharisaical Jews, and in the Roman Church. Yet the wiser heathen themselves corrected this error, of trusting to ceremonies, without moral good works. Plato, for instance, saith that God loves Worshippers, ὅτι χάρισι τεχνάζονται, ἀλλ' ἀληθείᾳ τιμῶντας ἀρετῇ, not that can artificially complement him with gestures and outward shows; but that in truth honour vertue. But the Scripture goes a great deal further; and teaches us also to add faith in God and in our Lord Jesus Christ. Moral good works will please God, when done for this end; not that we may merit thereby remission of sin: but that we may be obedient to God, and
teach

teach others to know him, and to celebrate him. And then also ceremonies, instituted by God, are pleasing to him, when they are done for this end; not to merit remission: but because they are signs admonishing us of the promises, to stir up our faith; and likewise because they are signa confessionis, signs of what Religion we profess; and lastly, quia sunt nervi congregationis, because they are the nerves whereby the Congregation of Christian people are joined together, and preserved in unity. These true ends, saith he, ought to be understood by the Church, and impious opinions to be removed. And for such good ends, one would think none should question, much less quarrel with those few Ceremonies, which our Church hath appointed in God's service.

That this was his opinion also, appears in his Commentaries upon the Fiftieth Psalm: where he saith, that even humane Ceremonies are, in some sort, the nerves of discipline; and condemns onely those that make them effectual for the remission of sin. But his mind is delivered most fully, in a discourse which I find in the Second Volume of his Works, concerning the method of preaching: where he directs Preachers to tell the people in general, that all Ceremonies are not to be abolished; as appears by this, that then we must take away Baptism and the Eucharist. And if any one ask, what must be done with Ceremonies instituted by man, he answers: some of them are necessary, and therefore must be retained; as certain days, in which the word of God is taught; and certain rites in the Church, such as that of singing Psalms; and certain forms of communicating, &c. But there are others not so necessary, what must be done with them? must they be tolerated? he answers, yes; if they be not impious, and if they be usefull: either because they commend Religion to the Vulgar, or they are instructive to Children, for whose sake they were chiefly instituted. For we see in some Churches,

N. B. *where there are no Ceremonies left but onely*

the Sacraments ; that Religion was never so contemptible as it is now. *For there is need of external show, which may commend Religion to the Vulgar, and make it appear more venerable ; because they cannot of themselves see its magnitude and dignity.*

It is impious also, *he resolves*, to think that all Ceremonies were instituted by wicked Popes. *No, there were some prudent and holy men, who perceived how supine and dull the minds of the vulgar were ; that they would never be sensible of the dignity and amplitude of Religion, unless their minds were both awakened and detained by some reverend solemn Ceremonies ; which might help to lift them up, and teach them to admire it. These are his Reasons why all Ceremonies ought not to be abolished ; because some are commanded ; others necessary ; and others, that are not, have no impiety in them, and are very profitable for weaker minds. Which I thought good here to insert ; because the opinion of so great and wise a Reformer, may weigh much with some persons who have little regard to us.*

I have been so long in this, that I must but briefly mention two verses more : upon which the before named Lord Bacon hath given some touches.

[c.] *The first is v. 15. where by a merry heart he understands a good Conscience (Adv. of Learn. B. VII. Ch. 1.) and thus glosses. A mind conscious of good intentions, though success be wanting, affords truer and purer joy, and to nature more agreeable, than all that this world can furnish a man withall, either for the enjoyment of his desires, or the repose of his mind. The words indeed of Solomon seem to be larger, and to extend unto all that are void of care, anxiety and sorrow ; but this is a pious sence, and may well be comprehended in them.*

[d.] *The other place is v. 19. the beginning of it : where he hath enlarged the sence further, than I have done in my Paraphrase (and the words will bear it) to this*

this purpose, that sloth in the conclusion, proves laborious. " For diligence and sedulous preparation levels the way we are to go in any business; and removes impediments in our passage. But he that is slothfull, and puts off all to the last point of execution, must needs perpetually, at every step, pass as it were through briars and thorns; which ever and anon intangle, detain and hinder him in his proceedings. The same observation may be made concerning the Government of a Family, wherein if there be due care and providence used, all goes on cheerfully; and as it were of its own accord, without noise or tumult: but if those be wanting, when some greater occasion falls out, all matters throng in to be dispatched at once; the Servants are in an uproar, the whole house rings, and there is nothing well done in that confusion.

[c] *The two verses before this some have connected; but there is no necessity of it: though it be a great truth, that passionate men are apt to make disturbance even at feasts; which men of temperate spirits endeavour to appease, though affronts be offered them. According to that excellent advice of Seneca, Let dissention begin from others, but reconciliation from thee. It is there observed by Bochartus (L. II. de Animalibus Sacris, Cap. 32. Part. 1.) that herbs, or as some translate it, green pottage, was the poorest; and an Ox put up into a stall and there fatted (or as the Talmudists understand the phrase, a crammed Ox) the noblest entertainment in those Countries. For it is reckoned among the provision made for the tables of Solomon and Nehemiah; and in the New Testament, the Marriage provision which the King made at his Son's Wedding were oxen and fatlings, XXI. Matth. 4. and the fatted calf was brought forth to entertain the returning Prodigal. And thus it was in other Countries, as he observes out of Dioscorides; who notes that Homer never sets any other cheer before*

fore his Heroes but this; no not at Marriages or any other meetings: though he introduce Agamemnon often treating the Princes of Greece.

1. **A** Soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

pacifies wrath; and prevents the further progress of it: but sharp, contemptuous and sawcy language incenses it more, or raises a passion, where there was none before. See Arg. [4].

2. The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.

speaks so seasonably and prudently, that it shall make the knowledge he imparts, both acceptable and usefull: whereas fools have nothing but silly stuff to utter; or pour out their thoughts so indiscreetly and confusedly, that they onely serve abundantly to declare their folly.

3. The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

God: who is every where; and observes the most secret motions and actions of men, both good and bad.

4. A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.

to heal differences and make peace, is an incomparable blessing to the place where he lives, and makes it a paradise: But he that abuses his tongue, to poison men with ill principles, to lye, to calumniate, to make bates, doth most miserably disturb mankind, and (like a bliting wind) blasts all the comforts of their life.

5. A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof, is prudent.

1. **A** Mild, submissive and yielding answer, to him who severely chides,

gives profitable instructions; and understands also how to

3. There is nothing either in heaven or earth that can escape the knowledge of

4. He that skilfully employs his tongue to give wholesome instructions, especially

5. He that regards not, or rejects the instruction of his Father, or Tutor, or other

other Superiour, whose love is equal to his Authority, will always be a fool: But he that is willing to receive even rebukes, from whomsoever they come, and carefully observe them, hath already attained a great degree of wisdom; and prudently consults his own welfare and happiness.

6. *In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.*

because he is well contented, and what he hath is likely to continue in his family: but there is much disquiet and trouble in the greatest revenues of the wicked; which can neither stay long with him, nor give him satisfaction while he enjoys them.

7. *The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doth not so.*

their knowledge; which they freely communicate, and diligently propagate unto others: but evil men are such fools, that either they have nothing to impart, or no heart to do any good with what they have.

8. *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.*

presented from wicked men, who have no thought of amending their lives, are abominable to the Divine Majesty; but the very prayers of upright men, though they are not able to bring Him any costly offerings, are exceeding acceptable, and prevail for great blessings from Him. See Arg. [b].

9. *The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.*

abominable to the Lord; which make even his sacrifices no better: but He loves him, whose thoughts, affections and

6. A truly just and mercifull man is very rich, whether he hath little or much; be-

7. Wife and good men are neither envious nor sparing of their pains to disperse

8. It is impious to think to please God, with mere gifts and sacrifices; which when they are pre-

9. For the whole way of a wicked man, his designs, contrivances and course of life, are all odious and

and indeavours, are earnestly bent to an unwearied pursuit of piety and vertue.

10. *Correction is grievous to him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die.*

10. Sharp and grievous punishments shall be inflicted on him that forsakes the

vertuous path, in which he began to tread: for he is not easily reclaimed; because it is displeasing to him to hear of his faults; and in time he hates reproof, and then must certainly perish.

11. *Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?*

11. The Lord is perfectly acquainted with things most hidden and secret to us; with the grave, the

infernal places, and things perished and quite consumed: how much more therefore with the souls of all men living upon earth, if they have but so much as an intention, or inclination to depart from Him?

12. *A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise.*

12. A prophane man, who makes a mock of God and of Religion, loves not to

argue with himself about such matters, and hates those that reprove him: which makes him avoid the acquaintance and society of wise and vertuous men, for fear he should meet with their reprehension.

13. *A merry heart maketh a cheerfull countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.*

13. When the mind of a man is inwardly satisfied and full of joy, it doth good to his body too; as ap-

pears in his cheerfull countenance: But when grief and sorrow seizes on the heart, it dejects, infeeble and breaks the most couragious spirit.

14. *The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.*

14. An intelligent man, who is heartily in love with wisdom, greedily seeks for solid knowledge: but men void

void of understanding gape after, and relish nothing but frivolous, vain and unprofitable things; which are like meat and drink unto them.

15. *All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.*

when any affliction befalls him, he be discontented with his condition, and cannot bear with disappointments: but a good heart, and cheerfull spirit is a cure for this; especially, a mind conscious to it self of designing well, whatsoever the success prove, is a perpetual comfort, and a higher satisfaction, than the most delicious banquet of the rich and prosperous. See Arg. [c].

16. *Better is little with the fear of the LORD, than great treasure, and trouble therewith.*

or any other sin, is much better than vast Treasures with disquiet and confusion of thoughts; which without a religious sense of God) are wont to attend upon abundance of wealth.

17. *Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox, and hatred therewith.*

among the Guests, is much better than the most sumptuous entertainment of him that hates us; or among those that quarrel and contend, even then when all differences should be forgotten. See Arg. [e].

18. *A wrathfull man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.*

being apt to quarrel for very trifles: but a meek and patient person is so far from raising strife, that he will endeavour to compose it, when he finds it is begun by others.

19. *The way of the slothfull man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.*

19. A slothfull man, when he hath any thing to doe, feigns to himself most grievous

15. All the days of a poor man are full of anxiety and trouble; especially if,

16. A small estate with the fear of offending the Divine Majesty by discontent

17. The meanest fare, with the love of him that invites, and with agreement a-

18. A man prone to wrath will easily disturb the most peaceable company,

19. A slothfull man, when he hath any thing to doe, feigns to himself most grievous

grievous difficulties, which he fancies, or pretends are impossible to be overcome: but those very things seem easie to the industry of honest hearted men; who go on smoothly in their business, and conquer all impediments. See Arg. [d].

20. *A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.*

20. A pious Son (as hath been said before X. 1. and cannot be repeated too often)

is a great joy to his Parents; especially to his Father, who hopes he will support his Name and Family: but a wicked man is as great a grief unto them; especially to his Mother (whose indulgence perhaps makes him more irreverent towards her) when he bears no regard to her; nay despises her commands and admonitions, and makes her contemptible unto others.

21. *Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walketh uprightly.*

21. It is a pleasure (as was also said before X. 23.) to a man void of consideration, to

doe the most absurd and wicked things: but he that understands himself, not onely directs his thoughts, and takes the greatest care, to live orderly and regularly; but feels it to be his highest satisfaction.

22. *Without counsel, purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.*

22. The necessity likewise of prudent Counsellors is fit again to be repeated (XI. 14.) for if they

be wanting, the best designs are likely to miscarry: but where there are a multitude of wise and vertuous men consulting for the publick good, they will easily compass any thing; by foreseeing all difficulties, and providing against them.

23. *A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it?*

23. And it is a great pleasure to a man to give wholesome counsel; and a greater to

see the good success of it: but the greatest of all (an inexpressible pleasure) both to himself and others, to have given it to seasonably, that a business was easily effected by it, which had not been done without it.

24. *The*

24. *The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.*

desires and hopes above this earth, and to have respect to God in all his actions: which will make him truly noble and great; and preserve him both from all mean and base practices, and from the most horrid dangers here, and utter destruction hereafter.

25. *The LORD will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the widow.*

possesses and disposes all things; for He will overturn the Family of haughty men (who forgetting him, trample upon their inferiours) though never so strongly supported: but will preserve the poor Widow, who hath no helper, in her right; when such insolent persons invade it.

26. *The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD: but the words of the pure are pleasant words.*

tations and discourses of such, as seek the welfare and comfort of others, are no less pleasing to Him than they are pure.

27. *He that is greedy of gain, troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.*

raising his Family, confounds it: but he that hateth bribes, and all unlawfull ways of gain, shall prosper, and continue it.

28. *The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.*

a business; and deliberates within himself to speak nothing that is not to the purpose: but bad men are rash and forward to utter their mind; and generally doe more hurt than good.

24. The way to be perfectly happy, a truly wise man sees, is to raise his thoughts,

25. Trust not in riches and power, but in the great Lord of the world, who pos-

26. For the Lord abhors all wicked designs, and mischievous contrivances: but the kind consul-

27. He that is so greedy of money, that he cares not how he gets it, instead of

28. A good man thinks it is soon enough to speak, when he is askt about

29. *The*

29. *The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.*

doe evil, though they implore his favour: but sends good men help, when they pray unto him, as readily as they were wont to send relief to others.

30. *The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: and a good report maketh the bones fat.*

which present themselves to our eyes: But nothing gives such intimate satisfaction, and makes a man so cheerfull in well-doing, as to hear a fair report of his own honest actions; or to receive the good news of the well-doing of other vertuous men.

31. *The ear that heareth the reproof of life, abideth among the wise.*

is to be numbered among the wise; and shall at last be able to give good instructions unto others.

32. *He that refuseth instruction, despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof, getteth understanding.*

he sets his own Soul at naught; and despiseth the means of his safety: but he that diligently hearkens to it, knows what's good for himself; and keeps his Soul from being lost for want of understanding.

33. *The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility.*

God; with a devout affection to Him, and fear to offend Him: And as this is the best disposition for Wisdom; so humility, and patient submission, in a low condition, is the best preparation for honour and preferment.

29. The Lord is far from giving any regard to the wicked, whose business it is to

30. It is a wonderful pleasure to behold all the beautiful works of God,

31. He that lends an attentive ear to wholesome reproof, and is obedient to it,

32. And whosoever he be that refuseth, much more that contemneth, such instructions and reproofs,

33. A brief Institution of Wisdom and Vertue is this, to have an awfull sense of

CHAP. XVI.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *This Chapter begins with a most necessary observation, which a good man ought alway to have in his mind (for which cause it is repeated: with little difference, twice more in this very Chapter, v. 9, 22. and again Chap. XIX. 21.) the sence of which our Translation seems to have missed. For it ascribes both the Preparation of the heart, and the Answer of the tongue, unto the Lord (which is true in this regard, that without Him we can do nothing) whereas the Hebrew words run plainly thus, Man hath the disposing of the heart, he may, with God's leave and common assistance, intend, propound, resolve within himself, what he will say and doe: but that he shall be able to utter things in that order he hath premeditated; or, if he be able, shall attain the end of his deliberation, and eloquent speech; is more than he can undertake; for that is as the Lord pleaseth. This seems to me to be better opened by Melancthon than any one I have read. Who truly observes, that such sayings as these do not take away the liberty of man's will or choice; but onely shew, that even the best men sometimes err in their choice; and that the success doth not always answer. For we must diligently distinguish, says he, between our election and the success: and remember that we need a double help of God, for the making a happy choice. One of judging aright; and the other afterward, of governing events. For unless our judgment be ruled right, many errors happen; as we see in Josiah, Zedekiah, Demosthenes, Pompey, Cicero; who all erred in eligendo bello in their resolves about war; and direfull events followed. And sometime also when the mind doth not err in its judgment; yet God is not pleased to assist the action, for other causes.*

As in the War against the Benjamites, which miscarried a great while, because the Israelites trusted in their own strength. We must always therefore be sensible, that happy events do not depend merely on humane forecast, diligence and power; as Jeremiah speaks, I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself, i. e. he cannot have what success he will; but must be beholden to God for his happiness. This our weakness God would have us to acknowledge, and to fear and depend on Him; as it follows here, v. 3. Commit thy work unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established. To this use we ought to accommodate such sayings, as these, not to a Stoical opinion of necessity. Thus he.

- [b] *And be no less worthily glosses, upon the common Interpretation of v. 4. the latter part of which hath exercised many Pens to little purpose: when the sence is clear, though no expositor, that I have seen, hath bit upon it. Viz. that God makes some use of wicked men, as well as of all things else; which they shall serve whether they will or no. For he disposes (so the word we translate hath made is to be understood; not of his creating things) all things correspondent to his own will and pleasure, which they all obey. So Iamnaantheu seems to be best translated, not for himself, but according to his will. However I have included the other interpretation also in my Paraphrase; but applied the day of evil not to the punishment which He inflicts upon the wicked for their sins: but which he orders them to inflict upon others, when their iniquities are ripe for his vengeance. For it is the method of his Providence, to direct the ambition, wrath, hatred, revenge, &c. which he sees in some wicked mens hearts, to vent themselves there, where it will do service to Him. Who wisely and justly makes some wicked men doe execution upon others like themselves. This seems to me the most easie and natural sence of the words: which*

which were remarkably fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman Souldiers; whom our Saviour used to punish his crucifiers. Not that they undertook that War, out of any design or desire to doe our blessed Saviour right; but out of an ambition to inflave the World: ἐχέητο ὃ αὐτοῖς ὁμοῦς ὁ Θεὸς ὡς ἀνθρώποις, δι' αὐτῶν τὰς ἡοσιβηκότας καλέζων, yet God made use of them for another design, as publick executioners, by whom he punished the ungodly, as Theodoret speaks upon LXXIV. Psal. 3.

- [c] *I must omit Melancthon's glosses upon this Verse, and the two next; that I may have room for his pertinent observation upon v. 10. A divine sentence is in the lips of the King, &c. "These words," says he, affirm the whole political order, Magistrates, Laws, Distinction of Dominions, Contracts, Judgments, Punishments, to be things ordained by the Wisdom of God among men. And since we know Political order to be the work of God, we ought to love it; and study to defend it; and modestly, for God's sake, obey it; and give thanks to God who preserves it; and look upon those horrible furies of the devil and men, who disturb this order, to be displeasing to God: as this whole Doctrine is explained Rom. XIII. But what is this divine Sentence which is in the King's lips? It is the Laws, says he: and judgments according to the Laws: and besides, God hath armed Kings with a power to make Laws of their own, not repugnant to his Laws; but built upon them, either by demonstrations, or probable reasons. God sometimes moves the mind of Kings also, and gives them singular motions (as other excellent Artificers have) because He will by that means save mankind, &c. Thus it was a singular motion in Solomon's reasoning about the true Mother of the Child. And in the judgment of Gonzaga in the*

" last age, upon the Spanish Governour of Milan under
 " him. Who having held a Noble person Captive a long
 " time, would not deliver him to his Wife (when she
 " petition'd and offered a large sum of money for his
 " redemption) unless he might lye with her; and
 " after he had obtained his desire, then caused her
 " husband to be killed, and delivered him dead to
 " her. Which when Gonzaga heard, and had examined,
 " he compelled him to marry this woman;
 " and as soon as he had done that, he condemned him
 " to be immediately beheaded, and gave her all his
 " estate.

But we are not from such places as this to infer, that
 Kings cannot give a wrong judgment: though this be as
 good a conclusion as from those words, the Priest's lips
 shall preserve knowledge, to conclude the Pope cannot
 err. Kings from this place of Solomon may as well pretend
 to Infallibility, as Priests from that place of Malachi.
 Nay, if we respect either the form of this precept,
 or the plenitude of God's promise for ability to perform
 it, we must confess, this place is more plain and peremptory
 for Kings; than any can be brought for the High-Priest's
 Infallibility, in giving definitive sentence. And yet all the
 places (as a famous Divine of our own speaks, Dr. Jackson,
 B. III. upon the Creed, Chap. 12.) that can be brought
 either for the King's or the Priest's Authority, rather shew
 what manner of men they should be, both in life and judgment;
 than assure them of any infallibility of judgment, if they be
 dissolute in life, and regard not the Laws of God. This was
 a thing never dreamt of by any, till the notoriously infamous
 lives of Popes discredited the titles of Sanctity and Infal-
 libility (which from the conceit of their predecessors integrity
 they had usurped) and enforced their flatterers to frame a
 distinction of Sanctity in Doctrine, separated from Sanctity
 of Life.

I thought it not amiss to say thus much upon this subject,

ject, because I find even Maldonate himself in his Notes upon this place, hath the confidence to conclude the Pope must needs have this privilege, which is promised to Kings: when, it is apparent, Kings are not infallible; and consequently, by his own reasoning, Popes cannot be so.

There are other notable sentences which would deserve a larger gloss than I have given in the Paraphrase; which I must pass by: because this Preface is already prolonged to a great length.

[d] *I shall onely therefore mention two. One v. 21. where Wisdom and Eloquence are compared together. The former of which, no doubt, is of greatest value, as we see in those words of God to Moses, when he disabled himself for the service imposed upon him, for want of the other faculty; There is Aaron, saith the text, he shall be thy speaker, and thou shalt be to him as God. Yet in profit, and popular esteem Wisdom gives place to Eloquence; according to the vulgar Translation of this verse, Sapiens corde appellatur prudens, sed dulcis Eloquia majora reperiet. Signifying, says the Lord Bacon (Adv. of Learning, Book. 6. Ch. 3.) not obscurely, that profoundness of wisdom may help men to fame and admiration; But it is Eloquence which prevails in business and active life.*

[c] *The other is v. 26. where I have put two senses together; according to the different acceptions of the Hebrew word Amal: which signifies either to take pains ones self, or to molest others. But I can see no reason why Maldonate should favour the LXX Translation; who, against the stream of all other Interpreters, apply these words to an ungodly man's digging up evil to himself, as if the meaning were, he digs a pit for himself, and the words he speaks are the cause of his punishment, as if he were burnt: unless it proceeded from his fondness for the Spanish Inquisition, which he was de-*

sirous to introduce every where. The very best of them, it appears by him (who was one of the most learned and judicious Interpreters in the Romish Church) are most devoutly bent to our destruction: For he cannot forbear here to alledge that Inquisition as a proof of Solomon's words. Id exemplo Inquisitionis Hispanicae perspicuum est, &c. This is apparent by the example of the Spanish Inquisition; whereby he that speaks any thing rashly against the faith, is deservedly delivered to the fire; which I WISH WERE DONE EVERY WHERE. Thus in the most literal sence, this Jesuit's lips are as a burning fire; in which he would have us not onely singed, but devoured: in pursuance of this Maxim of Solomon. Which others honestly interpret of those calumnies, discords, seditions, which evil men raise, by their tongues, to the destruction of their neighbours. For so it follows v. 28. A froward man soweth strife, &c.

1. **T**HE preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.

and in what manner and method they will speak: but whether they shall perswade, and prevail or no for such an Answer as they expect, nay, be able to deliver themselves with such elocution as they imagine, cannot be resolved by them; but depends upon the pleasure of the Lord. See Arg. [a].

2. All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes: but the LORD weigheth the spirits.

but imagine all that they contrive and doe, to be free from blame: which, when the Lord examines, who searches into the very intentions of mens hearts, is found to be very defective, if not vitious.

3. Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.

1. **M**EN may deliberate, and contrive, and order in their mind, what,

2. Such is the blindness of self-love, that men can find no fault in themselves;

3. When thou undertakest any thing; implore the Divine blessing;

bleſſing; and committing the ſucceſs of it to God's Providence, leave it to Him to give what iſſue to it He pleaſes: which is the ſureſt way to have thy honeſt deſigns accompliſhed.

4. *The LORD hath made all things for himſelf: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.*

4. The Lord diſpoſeth all things throughout the world, to ſerve ſuch ends, as He thinks fit to deſign; which they cannot reſuſe to comply withall: For if any men be ſo wicked as to oppoſe his Will, he will not loſe their ſervice; but when He brings a publick calamity upon a Country, employ them to be the executioners of his wrath, See Arg. [6].

5. *Every one that is proud in heart, is an abomination to the LORD: though hand joyn in hand, he ſhall not be unpuniſhed.*

5. There is no man ſo great, but if his mind grow lofty and arrogant, forgetting God, and inſolently oppreſſing his neighbour, he is hatefull beyond all expreſſion unto the Lord: who will take vengeance on him and pull him down, though he make never ſuch ſtrong confederacies to ſupport himſelf; for if he avoid one puniſhment, another ſhall overtake him; nay, his wickedneſs ſhall purſue him from generation to generation, (XI. 21.)

6. *By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD, men depart from evil.*

6. The moſt effectual means to appeaſe mens anger for private offences, or to divert the anger of God in publick calamities, is to exerciſe mercy and loving kindneſs, with juſtice and faithfull performance of promiſes: eſpecially when they proceed from an awfull regard to God, and Religious dread of his diſpleaſure; which will make a man carefull to decline every thing that is evil, and thereby eſcape the puniſhment that attends upon it.

7. *When a man's ways pleaſe the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.*

7. The beſt way to have our enemies reconciled unto us, is for us firſt to be reconciled unto God: for ſuch is the reverence men bear to

Virtue, and such is the love which the Lord hath to virtuous persons, that when all their designs and actions are such as He approves: He inclines even those that were their foes, to become their friends.

8. *Better is a little with righteousness, then great revenues without right.*

before vast incomes heaped up by oppression, and kept without hospitality.

9. *A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.*

reckons perhaps what success they will have: but the Lord determines what the event shall be, and orders his motions perhaps to such an issue, as never came into his thoughts.

10. *A divine sentence is in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.*

divine sagaciously in dubious and obscure things; that his resolutions and decrees may be received like Oracles; and all causes be decided by him so justly and exactly, that no man be wrong'd in the judgment which he passes. See Arg. [c].

11. *A just weight and balance are the LORD'S: all the weights of the bag are his work.*

more than in publick justice; for it also is of divine Institution; the great Lord of all requiring just and equal dealings in all our commerce one with another; which He hath ordained should be managed with scrupulous integrity, in the smallest, as well as in the greatest matters.

12. *It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.*

PSALM CXXII.

8. A small estate honestly gotten, and charitably enjoyed, is much to be preferred

9. The mind of man designs an end, and contrives what means to use, and

10. God is present in a singular manner unto a pious King, inspiring his mind to

11. And it is worthy of his care, that there be no corruption in private, no

12. It is not enough to good Kings that they do no injury; but they abominate, with the highest detestation,

detestation, all oppression, cruelty, extortion, &c. not only in themselves, but in others: for they know that Justice, Mercy, and true Religion, support their authority, and make their Kingdoms durable.

13. *Righteous lips are the delight of kings: and they love him that speaketh right.*

they delight in those that will not deceive them by false, unjust and malicious informations; and make him their favourite, who deals sincerely and tells them the truth, though it may seem ungratefull to them.

14. *The wrath of a king is as messengers of death: but a wise man will pacifie it.*

fended, as if the sentence of death were pronounced against him: but, as ill men and fools exasperate it more, so a virtuous and prudent Courtier appeases his anger, and makes a reconciliation.

15. *In the light of the king's countenance is life, and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.*

ly after he hath been incensed against him, it not onely revives, but gives him the greatest joy; for from his favour he promises himself all manner of happiness; as a plentiful harvest follows the showres of rain, which, in the spring, refresh the Corn.

16. *How much better is it to get wisdom, then gold? and to get understanding, rather to be chosen then silver?*

evil, and to understand how to behave a man's self upon all occasions; is, beyond all expression, better and more to be chosen, than the greatest treasures of gold and silver, which either the favour of Princes can give, or his own industry acquire.

13. And calumniators or flatterers find no acceptance with such Princes; but

14. The wrath of a King strikes such terror into him, with whom he is of-

15. And when a King will be pleased to look graciously upon a man, especial-

16. But after all is done, to get so much wisdom as to know the difference between good and e-

17. *The high way of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way, preserveth his soul.*

we may call it, in which they travel to decline every thing that is evil: and he who makes this his care, looking well to all his actions, that he doe nothing amiss, looks well to himself, and preserves his soul and body from destruction.

18. *Pride goeth before destruction: and an haughty spirit before a fall.*

lift up themselves in their own thoughts, and over-look all others with contempt, they are in the greatest danger to stumble; and not to see that, which will give them such a grievous downfall, as will break then all to shivers.

19. *Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, then to divide the spoil with the proud.*

ently to bear injuries, with afflicted, but meek and lowly persons; than to lift up ones self to the prejudice of others, and by trampling upon them to partake with the proud in their rapine and spoil.

20. *He that handleth a matter wisely, shall find good: and who so trusteth in the LORD, happy is he.*

ly to have good success: but none so happy, none so sure of prospering in his design, as he that confides more in the Lord, than in his own skill and industry.

21. *The wise in heart shall be called prudent; and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.*

on; and be highly esteemed, for his prudent counsels and resolutions: but if he have the powerfull charms of Eloquence also, to convey his mind delightfully unto others, it will add a greater value to his Wisdom; and make it

17. This is the constant aim and endeavour of upright men, the beaten path, as

18. Insolent behaviour is the forerunner of utter destruction: and when men

19. Therefore it is much better to submit to the meanest condition, nay, pati-

20. He that understands his business thoroughly, and manages it prudently and discreetly, is like-

21. He whose mind is well furnished with wisdom, cannot but win a great reputation;

it more diffusive and instructive unto the world. See Arg. [d].

22. *Understanding is a well-spring of life unto him that bath it: but the instruction of fools is folly.* 22. A clear understanding and right judgment of things, like an inexhaustible

spring, gives perpetual comfort and satisfaction to him in whom it is; and makes him very usefull unto others: but the learning of fools is frivolous and vain; and therefore, if they undertake to instruct others, they onely make them like themselves.

23. *The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.* 23. The Mind of a wise man instructs him to speak judiciously and pertinently: and makes him not only communicate his thoughts to others, but with such weight of reason as increases their learning.

24. *Pleasant words are as an honey comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.* 24. Especially when he can deliver his mind in pleasing and delightful words, flowing from him with a natural Eloquence, as honey drops from the comb: which ravish the affections, and touch a man's heart to the very quick; when he needs either comfort or cure for any inward disease wherewith he labours.

25. *There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death.* 25. But there is never more need of caution, than when we hear a moving O-
rator, therefore this instruction may be here necessary to be repeated (XIV. 12.) examine every thing strictly and impartially; and be not led away merely by thy fancy, and thy appetite: for they make many things seem innocent, which in themselves, and in the issue, are deadly and destructive.

26. *He that laboureth, labour-
eth for himself; for his mouth cra-
veth it of him.*

that all his labour is for his own preservation; his mouth begging this favour of him, that he may not starve: and on the contrary, he that spends his time in giving trouble and vexation unto others, will find it fall upon himself; for he cannot speak so much as an evil word, but it will return upon him and fly back in his own face. See Arg. [e].

27. *An ungodly man diggeth up
evil: and in his lips there is as a
burning fire.*

devise mischief; wherein he labours, as if he was digging for a treasure; and one way is, to brand his neighbour with false reports and slanders and thereby utterly destroy his reputation.

28. *A froward man soweth strife;
and a whisperer separateth chief
friends.*

nefs to disturb the world, and raise dissensions among those that would live in peace; by backbiting, detracting, and whispering false stories: making a breach even between Princes and people, husband and wife, nay, the dearest friends and familiars, if they hearken to their tales.

29. *A violent man inticeth his
neighbour, and leadeth him into the
way that is not good.*

doe wrong themselves, but perswade others to enter into their society; and then lead them into the most pernicious courses.

30. *He shutteth his eyes to de-
vise froward things; moving his
lips, he bringeth evil to pass.*

trive the ruin of others; and the sign being given, they furiously execute the mischief they have designed.

26. It is a power-
full motive to a man
to take pains in an
honest employment,

27. And it is not
a little pains that an
ungodly lawless man
takes, to plot and

28. Others of them
have such a perverseness
in their spirit,
that it is their busi-

29. Another sort
live by rapine and o-
pen violence; who
are not content to

30. Which they
do not fall into by
chance; but with
profound study con-

31. *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.*

and usefull: which is the best way also to prolong ones days; and bring one to that great honour, which is due to those, who have long done much good to Mankind.

32. *He that is slow to anger, is better then the mighty: and he that ruleth his spirit, then he that taketh a city.*

mighty men who quell the enemies that oppose them; and he that hath power to govern all his own inclinations, affections and passions by reason, hath a nobler Empire than he that subdues Cities and Countries by force of Arms.

33. *The lot is cast into the lap: but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD.*

seem most casual: For though men cast the lots into the lap of a garment, or into a hollow vessel, and thence draw them out again; yet it is the Lord who directs entirely in what order they shall come forth, and so determines the matter in doubt, according to his pleasure.

31. Old age is very venerable, when a man's past life hath been truly vertuous

32. He that can suppress the vehement motions of anger, deserves more praise than those

33. Acknowledge the Divine Providence in all things, even in those which

CHAP. XVII.

ARGUMENT.

In the first verse of this Chapter the wise man observes how happy that Family is, which lives in peace and perfect agreement one with another; though they have but a mean estate. And next to this how happy a thing it is, if there be but one wise and vertuous man in a Family (suppose he be but a Servant) when any dissensions and differences arise in it. For so the Lord Bacon
(Advanc.

(Advanc. of Learning, Book VIII. Chap. 2. Parab. 2.)
 expounds the [a] second verse: whose words I will set
 down, because if they hit not the sence compleatly, yet
 they very pithily express a part of it, and carry in them
 a very important truth. " In all troubled and disa-
 " greeing Families, saith he, there is commonly some
 " Servant or gentle Friend, who being powerfull with
 " both sides, may moderate and compose the differences
 " that are among them. To whom, in that respect the
 " whole house, and the Master himself are much en-
 " gaged and beholden. This Servant, if he aim onely
 " at his own ends, cherishes and aggravates the divi-
 " sions of the Family: but if he be sincerely faithfull
 " and upright, certainly he deserveth much; so as to
 " be reckoned as one of the Brethren; or at least to
 " receive a fiduciary administration of the inheri-
 " tance.

[b] And after some other documents there follows a nota-
 ble rule for the making peace, and ending all differences;
 whether between particular persons in Families, or be-
 tween Kingdoms, v. 9. upon which, the same great per-
 son thus glosses (ib. Parab. 27.) " There are two ways
 " of proceeding to arbitrate differences and reconcile
 " affections. The one begins with an act of oblivion
 " of what is past; the other begins with a repetition of
 " wrongs, subjoyning apologies and excuses. Now
 " some think this last to be the onely way; insomuch
 " that I have heard a prudent person and great States-
 " man lay down this Maxim, He that treats of
 " peace, without a recapitulation of the terms of
 " difference, rather deceives mens minds with the
 " sweet name of agreement, than composes them by
 " equity and moderation of right. But Solomon, a
 " wiser man than he, is of a contrary opinion: approving
 " an act of oblivion, and forbidding repetition. For in
 " repetition or renewing the memory of the causes of dif-
 " ference, there are these inconveniences: not only that it
 " is;

" *is, as we say, unguis in ulcere, raking in the ulcer,*
 " *which very much exasperates, but also indangers the*
 " *breeding of new quarrels while they are debating the*
 " *old (for the parties at difference will never accord*
 " *about the terms of their falling out) and lastly, in*
 " *the issue it brings the matter to apologies: where-*
 " *as both the one and the other party would seem ra-*
 " *ther to have remitted the offence, than to have ad-*
 " *mitted excuses for it.*

Melancthon thinks this and the three next verses 10, 11, 12. to be Sentences near of kin; all belonging to the right method in judging, which is comprehended in that saying of Christ's, If thy Brother sin against thee, tell him of it between thy self and him: *And interprets this ninth verse thus, (taking Aluph for a Prince, which we translate chief Friends) He that orderly admonishes him that erreth, cures him and makes no publick disturbance; saves the man, and preserves publick concord; but this order being neglected, thence arises out of brawlings, discords of Princes, wars and devastations.*

[c] *Now an evil man onely seeks scoldings or contentions (as it follows v. 11.) i. e. saith he, he doth not seek truth nor the good of the Church; but troubles without end. Thus Cleon and Alcibiades in the State, scattered seeds of war at Athens: the Cynicks and Academics contradicted every body among the Philosophers: and lately Valla, Cornelius Agrippa, Carolostadius, &c. had the like scolding natures. These seek not truth; but contradict things rightly spoken, or wantonly move unnecessary disputes, and will not yield when they are admonished, but with greater rage defend their errors: Of such Solomon here saith in the next verse, it is better to meet a bear robbed of her whelps, than a fool in his folly. An example of which we meet withall, when we meet with a bewitched Papist, who defends the most manifest errors. Thus he.*

But

But that which the Vulgar translates semper jurgia quarit malus, and we translate, an evil man seeks onely rebellion, the most and the best Interpreters, take the other way, as the words lie more naturally in the Hebrew, a man very rebellious seeks nothing but mischief: which sence I have expressed in the Paraphrase, together with the other.

[d] *The truth of the next verse (v. 12.) is admirably opened by Bochartus (L. III. de Animal. Sacris, Cap. 9. Part. 1.) who observes four things concerning the Bear, out of good Authours. The first every one knows, that a Bear is an exceeding fierce Creature: the second is, that the Female is more fierce than the Male: the third, that she is more fierce than ordinary, when she hath Whelps: and lastly, that when she is robbed of them she is fiercest of all, immanem in modum, even unto rage and madness. Which the Scripture takes notice of in two other places beside this, 2 Sam. XVII. 8. XIII. Hosea 8. where St. Hierom observes that the writers of natural History say, among all wild Beasts, none more fierce and cruel than the Bear, in two cases especially, when she wants food, and when she is robbed of her Whelps. The reason of this last is there given by Kimchi; which well enough agrees with the comparison, which the Wise man here makes: for a Bear cannot be more in love with her whelps, than a fool is with his absurd opinions and resolutions: and as a Bear falls upon the next person she meets withall, taking him for the robber; so doth a fool upon every one that stands in his way, though he be never so much obliged to them. He spares none in the heat of his passions, but furiously abuseth them, &c.*

[e] *Unto what is expressed in the Paraphrase upon v. 17. concerning a Brother being born for Adversity (which I have referred, as the best interpreters do, unto a Friend) this may be added; as the plainest translation of the Hebrew words. A true Friend*
(spoken)

(spoken of before) is born (that is, becomes) a Brother in Adversity. He was a Friend before; this makes him a Brother: and so he is to be esteemed.

[f] There is a phrase in the nineteenth verse, exalteth his gate, which is variously taken by Interpreters. I have expounded it literally; not for the mouth, but for the gate of an house or other place: and have put two sences together.

[g] Various glosses also have been made upon the beginning of v. 22. a merry heart doth good like a medicine: where because the particle like is wanting in the Hebrew, other constructions have been made of the words: some, for instance, having taken them thus, a merry heart makes a medicine work better, or doe more good. But he that can consult Bochartus (in his second Book of Sacred Animals, Chap. 16. Part 2.) may find so many examples of the defect of that which they call כף דמיון caph similitudinis; that he will not think it unreasonable to supply it, (as our Translators have done) in this place of the Proverbs.

In the twenty fourth verse I have put two sences, in which the words may be taken, into one. And that none may wonder at the repetition of the [h] same thing in the twenty fifth verse, which was said just before in the twenty first; I shall here observe: That there is nodoubt but Solomon, having frequent occasions to speak of the same matter, varied the words sometimes, but not the sence; and so the Collectors of his sayings put down both. And he might speak the oftner of this matter, having an example before his eyes of the great weakness of his own Son: who, it is not unlikely, was a perpetual grief to him. There is also something observable in this verse, which was not in the other, viz. that the untowardness of Children have many times different effects upon the Parents: provoking the Fathers to anger and exasperation; and the Mothers to grief and sorrow,

to which their tenderness more inclines them than to the other passion.

There are several ways also of expounding the latter end of the next verse, v. 26. I have expressed the sence of our Translation; and had respect, in the next verse to that (v. 27.) to both readings of the word which we render excellent.

1. **B**etter is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife.

oyl, &c.) in the open field, and love and concord therewith; than in a house full of the best chear in the world, attended with brawling, contention and strife.

2. A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame: and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.

full Servant sometimes arrives at the honour of being appointed the Governour of a Son, whose folly and wickedness make him a discredit to his Family: nay, he is left not only Executor of the Father's Will, or Trustee for the Children; but his merits perhaps are rewarded with a portion of the Estate, which is to be distributed among them. See Arg. [a].

3. The fining-pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.

pure or no; but none can search into the secret thoughts, designs and inclinations of mens Souls, but the Lord: who (as those metals are tried by fire) many times proves and discovers what they are by sharp afflictions and troubles.

4. A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips: and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.

1. **T**here is more satisfaction in a bit of dry bread (without butter or

2. Probity and prudence, are so much better than mere riches and noble birth; that a wise and faith-

3. The art of man hath found out means to prove whether gold and silver be

4. A man that designs evil unto others, hearkens greedily to him, that will tell false

false and mischievous stories; and there never wants such a man, of the very same mind with himself; for he who gives his mind to lying and falshood, listens to him that speaks the most pestilent things.

5. *Who so mocketh the poor, reproacheth his maker: and he that is glad at calamities, shall not be unpunished.*

5. He that derides a man because he is poor, forgets God, who can bring him down to as low a condition; nay, affronts his Majesty, who hath promised to take a peculiar care of such friendless persons: nor is he much better, who rejoyceth at the calamity of others; which will bring unavoidable punishments upon himself.

6. *Childrens children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.*

6. The honour and comfort of Parents lies in a numerous progeny; which doth not degenerate from their ancestors Vertue: And that which makes Children illustrious, is their being descended from worthy Parents; whose wisdom and vertue reflects an honour upon their posterity.

7. *Excellent speech becometh not a fool: much less do lying lips a prince.*

7. It doth not become a fool to discourse of grave and weighty matters; which as they are above him, so are not regarded out of his mouth, though he should speak excellent things: but it is much less seemly for a Prince to lye and deceive; which as it is below him, who represents the God of truth, so it makes him despicable and destroys his Authority, when his Subjects cannot rely upon his word.

8. *A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.*

8. A gift is so tempting that it can no more be refused, than a lovely Jewel by him to whom it is presented: and such is its power, it commonly prevails over all men, dispatches all business, carries all causes; and, in a word, effects whatsoever a man desires.

9. *He*

9. *He that covereth a transgression, seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter, separateth very friends.*

course to preserve friendship, and to make himself universally beloved: but he who rakes up that fault again, and objects it afresh when it was forgotten, breaks the strictest bands of amity, and makes an irreconcilable separation. See Arg. [b].

10. *A reproof entreth more into a wise man, than an hundred stripes into a fool.*

works a greater alteration there; than an hundred stripes will do for the amendment of an obstinate fool.

11. *An evil man seeketh only rebellion: therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.*

all reverence to God, or to his Governours, is wholly bent upon mischief and cannot be reclaimed; it remains therefore onely, that a severe execution be done upon him, to cut him off in his folly, without mercy. See Arg. [c].

12. *Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly.*

for it is possible to defend a man's self against the one; but there is no way to hinder the brutish motions of the other. See Arg. [d].

13. *Whoso rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.*

ed nothing but good; that the punishment of his ingratitude shall

9. He that passes by and buries in oblivion, a transgression that hath been committed against him, takes the best

10. One reproof penetrates deeper into the mind of an ingenuous man, and

11. Who seeking nothing but to have his own will and being so refractory that he hath shaken off

12. There is less danger in meeting a Bear in the height of her rage, than a furious fool in the pursuit of his unruly passions and desires: against the one; but motions of the other.

13. It is so unnatural for a man to return evil to him from whom he hath received

shall not rest in his own person, but descend upon his posterity to all generations.

14. *The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with.*

breach is like cutting the banks of a river; which presently overflows the neighbouring grounds, but cannot easily be reduced into its bounds again. It is best therefore to make peace immediately, before both parties be involved in such troubles, as, like a deluge of water, lay all desolate.

15. *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD.*

more than that, acquits him; or he that pleads against the righteous, nay plainly condemns him. Certain it is, they are both most highly obnoxious to his displeasure, who is the fountain of justice; and as he would have it exactly administered, so he hates those who endeavour to confound the nature of good and evil among men.

16. *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?*

with purchase wisdom, how to use it? alas! he wants understanding to desire it, and to procure good Instructours; in which his riches (if his mind were good) might be serviceable to him.

17. *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.*

a fit, nor alters with the change of ones condition: but continues stedfast in adversity, as well as in prosperity; nay, in straits and distresses, shews himself more like a Brother than a Friend. See Arg. [e].

14. When men begin a quarrel or a difference they know not where it will end: For the very first

15. It is hard to say, which is most detestable to the Lord, he that pleads for a wicked man, and,

16. What good doth a great estate in the possession of a fool? Can he there-

17. Time makes proof of a Friend; who, if he be sincere, loves not merely for

18. *A man void of understanding striketh hands, and becometh surety in the presence of his friend.*

word for the payment of another man's debts (VI. 1. XI. 15.) and especially to enter into bonds in the presence of his neighbour for whom he engages: which may make him more careless about the payment; than he would have been, if unknown to him, he had been security for him.

19. *He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and he that exalteth his gate, seeketh destruction.*

and contention: which as necessarily draws along with it abundance of sins, as lifting up a man's self above his estate, in raising sumptuous buildings, brings him to ruin; or as breach of the publick peace opens wide the flood-gates to all iniquity. See Arg. [f].

20. *He that hath a froward heart, findeth no good: and he that hath a perverse tongue, falleth into mischief.*

himself deceived in his expectation: and he who employs his tongue to deceit and fraud, pretending fair to men before their face, but slandering them behind their back, shall, by that very means, bring mischief upon himself.

21. *He that begetteth a fool, doeth it to his sorrow; and the father of a fool hath no joy.*

in the education of Children: For if a Son prove vicious and lewd, it will be such an inexpressible grief to his Father, that he will take no comfort at all, in any thing he enjoys, v. 25.

22. *A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.*

more to health than a cheerful spirit, which serves instead

18. He is very inconsiderate, whose kindness makes him forward to pass his

19. He vainly pretends to the love of piety, who accustoms himself to brawling

20. A man of wicked designs, which he resolves to accomplish by any sort of means, shall find

21. Great is the care which ought to be taken, in the contract of Marriage, and

22. And consequently it will shorten his days: For as nothing conduces of

of physick; so nothing destroys it more than sadness and grief, which consumes the vital juices, and dries up the body to skin and bone. *See Arg. [g].*

23. *A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.*

23. No man would willingly be known to be so wicked as to be bribed to do injustice: but there are too many that will suffer themselves to be secretly corrupted by presents, to give counsel or judgment contrary to the course of Law and Equity.

24. *Wisdom is before him that hath understanding; but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth.*

24. As a wise man's understanding appears in his very countenance; and a fool is known by his garish and wandering eyes: so the one hath his wisdom always present and ready at hand to guide and govern him; when the other knows not what to follow, but his thoughts are roving up and down to no purpose, though he ramble to the very ends of the earth.

25. *A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.*

25. A foolish dissolute Son, who regards not the counsel of his Parents, wasting their Estate and disgracing their Family, is such a vexation to his Father that he provokes his indignation; and such a grief to his mother, that it makes her life bitter and irksome to her. *See Arg. [h].*

26. *Also to punish the just is not good, nor to strike princes for equity.*

26. There may be specious pretences for it, but it is against all honesty and piety; to punish innocent persons together with delinquents: especially to scourge Judges and Governors, for doing equal justice upon all offenders.

27. *He that hath knowledge, spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.*

27. The more any man knows, the less he is apt to talk: for his wisdom gives him such an excellent composure of spirit, that it represses his heat, his forwardness and haste; and makes him coolly deliberate what, and when it is fit to speak.

28. *Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise : and he that shutteth his lips, is esteemed a man of understanding.*

holds his peace : and he whose mind hath such power over his mouth, as to keep it shut, that nothing may suddenly and impetuously go out, is wise indeed.

28. Such a vertue it is to be silent, that he who understands nothing is deemed wise, as long as he

CHAP. XVIII.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *There is so much difficulty in the two first Verses, which hath produced so many various interpretations, that I scarce know which to follow. Some take that word which we translate separateth himself, in a good sence ; others in a bad: I have chosen the latter, because it seems most agreeable to the rest of the words. But the Chaldee Interpreter, gives a quite different sence both of that word, and of some other in these verses : and de Dieu hath shown there is such reason for it, that I think I am obliged here to take notice of it, and to Paraphrase upon it.*

By niphrad, which we render separateth himself, he understands a man divided, uncertain in his own mind, who can stick to nothing ; but wanders about in his own thoughts. And the last word in the first verse, jith galla, which we translate intermedleth, he translates is left desolate. And then in the next verse, taking behith galloth for wandring up and down ; not for discovering, or revealing, as we do, the Paraphrase will run thus.

V. 1. *An unconstant man desires many things, and seeks satisfaction : but whatsoever he seeks, he never meets with it, but is defeated, and disappointed in all his designs.*

2. *And*

2. And this is a certain character of a fool, that he never fixes in any thing: but chuses rather to gad up and down, and rove from one inquiry to another; than give his mind to true wisdom and prudence, in which he hath no pleasure.

The Lord Bacon aims at this, I suppose, when he briefly expresses the sence of Solomon, thus, Pro desiderio quarit cerebrosus, omnibus immiscet se, "A hare-brain'd man seeks to satisfie his fancy, and intermixeth himself with all things. According to that of Seneca, Vita sine proposito, languida est & vaga. "A life that proposeth no end to pursue, is faint, sickly and vagrant.

If we take the word niphrad in a good sence, then the Paraphrase must run thus:

1. He that lives retired, and sequesters himself from all company, and business, out of a true affection to wisdom; endeavours to have a sound knowledge and understanding of things.
2. But a vain man addicts himself to his Studies, for no other end; but onely to vapour with a shew of wisdom, which he doth not love.

[b] *As for the vulgar Translation, it is so remote from the Hebrew, that I shall onely observe an handsome application which the Lord Bacon hath made of the second verse; to a quite different purpose from all Interpreters that I am acquainted with. The words there run thus, Non recipit stultus verba prudentum, nisi ea dixeris quæ versantur in corde ejus. Which is commonly understood of accommodating ones self to the humour of a fool, who otherwise will not regard what is said to him: but that great Man applies to the way of dealing with men of corrupt minds and depraved judgments. "Who pre-suppose that honesty grows out of weakness of wit, and want of experience; or onely out of a silly belief given to Preachers and School-masters, to Books and Popular opinions.*
"And

“ And therefore unless you can make them plainly perceive that you know what is in their very heart, when you exhort and admonish them; and are as well acquainted with their depraved principles and crooked rules, and have as fully discovered, and deeply sounded them as themselves; they will despise all manner of vertue and the most excellent counsels; according to that admirable Oracle of Solomon, A fool will not receive the words of the wise, unless thou speakest the very things that are in his heart, i. e. an honest man can do no good upon the wicked; unless he know all the coverts and depths of wickedness. In which Matchiavel himself hath done some service; by discovering plainly what men use to doe, not what they ought to doe. *Advanc. of Learning*, B. VII. Chap. 2.

[c] The next verse may have a connexion with these two, and intend to describe the worst of wicked men; who seek for glory by being so bold as to scorn Religion, and all the Teachers of it. Such men are the greatest of Solomon's fools: by whom an excellent person (whom the Hebrews call Ish in opposition to Adam) should not be discouraged, from pouring out good instructions; as he shows in the following words, verse 4.

[d] Then after a caution to Judges (v. 5.) to search into the merits of a cause; and not merely to look to the quality of the person that appears before them; he observes in several verses, the mischief done by the tongue, v. 6, 7, 8. In the last of which the word Mithlahamim being of uncertain signification, (because it is but once more used, and in this Book, to the same purpose) I have taken in two or three of the senses, of which it is capable: as he that pleases to examine, will be satisfied.

[e] Rabbi Levi observes, that in the tenth verse there begins another sort of precepts, of a different kind from those that have been hitherto delivered from the beginning

ginning of the Tenth Chapter, to this place. All which have been in a manner, concerning the danger of such vices, as sloth, hatred, anger, deceit, brawling, strife, impiety; and other parts of that folly, against which he hath given many General cautions. But now he proceeds, as that Jewish Doctor thinks, to an Argument of another nature, directing men in the management of affairs of State, or in domestick business, &c. Which is true in part, but not an exact Observation. For there are precepts of the former kind, interspersed in the following Chapters, as any one may see that will read them: and so there are several political maxims, and others belonging to different matters, in the Chapters foregoing. Even that observation which here immediately follows (v. 11.) concerning a rich man's confidence in his Wealth, rather than in the Divine Providence and protection, was delivered in part before X. 13. And the very next concerning pride and humility (v. 12.) in Chap. XV. 33. and XVI. 18. And that also (v. 16.) about gifts was touched in XVII. 8.

[f] The thirteenth verse is referred by some to Judges, who were anciently called Cognitores. And in good Authors cognoscere is as much as to doe the office of a Judge; who ought to take the greatest care to know the truth, before he give a sentence. For if it be a shame to a private person, in ordinary discourse, to answer a matter before he heareth it; much more will it be to a Magistrate, if in matters of justice and judgment, he come to a resolution, before he hath taken full cognizance of them.

[g] Some would connect the seventeenth verse with the foregoing, but I have taken it separately. And there being several ways of interpreting it, either politically, with relation to causes brought before a Judge; or spiritually, with relation to what is transacted in a man's own Soul; I have followed our Translation, which seems to me, nearest to the Hebrew. In which a just

man

man is not the person of whom Solomon speaks; but the mark of the Nominative Case (as Grammarians call it) is set before the word first. So that it hath the same meaning with our vulgar saying; One tale is good, till another be told: though I think there is more in it; and the Lord Bacon hath made this excellent discourse upon it; which I have not neglected in my Paraphrase.

“The first Information, says he, (Adv. of Learning, Book
“VIII. Ch. 2. Parab. 17.) in any cause, if it a little
“fix it self in the mind of the Judge, takes deep root,
“and wholly seasons and prepossesses it: so as it can
“hardly be taken out, unless some manifest falshood be
“found in the matter of the Information; or some
“cunning dealing, in exhibiting, and laying open the
“same. For a bare and simple defence, though it be just
“and more weighty, can hardly compensate the preju-
“dice of the first Information, nor is of force in it self,
“to reduce the scales of Justice, once swayed down, to
“an equal balance. Wherefore it is the safest course
“for a Judge, that nothing touching the proofs and
“merit of the cause, be intimated before hand; un-
“till both Parties be heard together: And it is best
“for the defendant, if he perceive the Judge to be pre-
“occupied, to labour principally in this (so far as the
“quality of the cause will admit) to discover some coun-
“ting shifts, and fraudulent dealing, practis’d by
“the adverse party, to the abuse of the Judge.

They that expound this verse (as the Ancients generally do) concerning private judgment, within a man’s own soul, follow the LXX. and the vulgar Latin: and commonly make this the meaning. A good man, before he mind another man’s faults, will first narrowly look to his own: and call himself to an account, before he inquire after their miscarriages. This is an excellent sence (if the words would bear it) which some of the Lutherans follow: even Melancthon himself, who thus translates

translates it, Justus initio est accusator sui, postea inquirat in alium: and runs into a long discourse concerning self-love, and mens blindness to their own faults, and quick-sightedness in spying other mens; citing the known sayings of Catullus, Horace and Persius to this purpose. But, though he take the just man here to be opposed to the hypocrite our Saviour speaks of, who minds the mote in his Brother's eye, and neglects the beam in his own, yet he acknowledges that the Greek word in the LXX belongs to the Law, and the civil Courts, viz. προσολογια, which is the allegations of the accuser, before the other party be heard: and hath this remark out of Demosthenes. It is hard to pull out of mens minds, the opinion they have first conceived.

Which Verres among the Romans understood so well, that it was his commontrick, to accuse those whom he had injured: for men are apt to favour the Plaintiff; supposing he cannot have the impudence to complain without a cause.

Nay, there are those in the Roman Church that apply the vulgar Translation this way; to this sence. A just man is so prudent (as well as honest) as to relate all that concerns his cause sincerely, without concealing any thing; even accusing himself if he be guilty: whereby he procures greater favour, and prevents what his Adversary would have said; who, be sure, would have laid it open to his disgrace, if he had craftily omitted any thing, &c.

But I will not trouble the Reader with any other of their Interpretations; which are devised merely to make good that Translation. The truth of ours may be further justified from the next, v. 18. which belongs to the matter of civil controversies: which if the Judges could not determine, were referred to God's decision by lots.

[h] *But I have said enough, if not too much of this: and therefore shall onely observe a few reflections which Melancthon makes upon the Twenty-second verse.*

“ Where

“Where he notes first how acceptable the state of Marriage is to Almighty God, as well as unto us. And next, what care he takes of pious persons in that state; for so he understands those words, as they run in the Vulg. Lat. *Hauriet voluptatem à Deo*. As if he should say, there are great dangers in humane life, and many common miseries; but God will be the keeper of such married persons, as in happy concord and agreement, invoke his protection. Such were Zachary and Elizabeth, and other pious persons: whom God wonderfully preserved, when the armies of wicked men ravaged all Judæa. When Lamyrus slew 30000 Jews, and caused the captives to eat the carcases of their Brethren; then he protected Zachary and Elizabeth, and the blessed Virgin and her parents; as he saved the three Children in the fiery furnace. By which examples we may conceive, what it is to draw pleasure from the Lord. Those words also show, what comfort and delight there is in an agreeable marriage; and therefore we ought to flee fornication: and keep in mind those severe threatenings, Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge, &c. and the punishments God inflicted upon the inhabitants of Canaan for their confused lusts. *Nec est dubium, magnam partem calamitatum, &c.* Nor is there any doubt, that a great part of the calamities, among all mankind, are the punishments of filthy lusts. Let us therefore be more ardent in begging chastity of God; for the more he is displeased with impurity, the more carefully we ought to preserve chastity, and let us observe that rule, To shun sins is to shun the occasions of sins.

1. **T**Hrough desire, a man having separated himself, seeketh and intermedleth with all wisdom.

1. **H**E that effects singularity inquires into all manner of things; according as his vain-glorious

glorious humour leads him: which makes him also bend himself, with all the wit he hath, to overthrow the solid reasons of wiser men. See Arg. [a].

2. *A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover it self.*

design of his studies is, to make a vain ostentation of wisdom unto others: This is his chiefest pleasure, to hear himself discourse; that is, discover the folly that is in his heart. See Arg. [b].

3. *When the wicked cometh, then cometh also contempt, and with ignominy, reproach.*

a prophane person comes, he brings along with him, contempt of God, and Religion, and good men: and (as one wickedness grows out of another) that contempt improves into affronts, and reproachfull language of them. See Arg. [c].

4. *The words of a man's mouth, are as deep waters, and the well-spring of wisdom, as a flowing brook.*

mind being like a fountain, out of which wise thoughts spring perpetually; and flow in abundance, with a torrent of Eloquence, for the common good and benefit.

5. *It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.*

sty and goodness, to have respect to the person, not to the cause; which is brought before one in judgment: for by that means the wicked is favoured, because he is rich, or because he is a friend, &c. and the just man loses his right, and is oppressed, because he is poor, or none of the Judge's acquaintance.

2. For a fool will never take any pleasure in true understanding; but all the

3. Into whatsoever company or society (suppose into the Schools of Wisdom)

4. A man of great understanding is never exhausted, nor wants matter of useful instruction: his

5. Apologies may be made for it, but it can never be made consistent with hone-

6. *A fools lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.*

the quarrel: but is so unskillfull, that instead of making them friends, he increases the difference, till from words they come to blows; in which he escapes not without some share of them to himself.

7. *A fools mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.*

himself by his own discourse: and if he go about to defend what he saith; he is but the more intangled, to the certain hazard of his life.

8. *The word of a tale-bearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.*

and kindness, when he backbites others; nay seems perhaps to doe it very unwillingly, with great grief of heart, and not without excuses for the persons, from whom he detracts: but his words give them the most deadly wound; and sink deep into the mind of those that hear them. See Arg. [d].

9. *He also that is slothfull in his work, is brother to him that is a great waster.*

may be called Brethren: for he that looks not after his business, must needs come to poverty, as well as he that is a spend-thrift.

10. *The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.*

securest defence in all manner of dangers: unto which a virtuous man may have the confidence cheerfully to resort, and hope to find protection; nay, to be there as safe, as if he was in an impregnable fortrels. See Arg. [e].

6. If a fool find others scolding or contending, he will thrust himself into

7. For in all other cases, a fool uses his tongue so imprudently, that he ruins

8. A whisperer of false stories makes a great show of harmlessness, if not of love

9. There is so little difference between a slothfull man and a prodigal, that they

10. The Almighty power and goodness of the great Lord of the World, is the se-

11. *The rich man's wealth is his strong city: and as an high wall in his own conceit.*

heaps of wealth; which he fancies hath a power to do any thing, and is able to defend him (like a high bulwark, which none can scale) from all assaults: but, alas! this is onely his own vain opinion; he is safe merely in imagination.

12. *Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility.*

his brethren, it is a certain forerunner of his utter destruction: as on the other side, humility, meekness and patience, in a low condition, is the best preparation for honour and preferment.

13. *He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.*

of it (that is before he understand it) thinks perhaps to show the quickness of his apprehension: but, by his impertinent discourse, declares his egregious folly, and makes himself ridiculous. See Arg. [f].

14. *The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity: but a wounded spirit, who can bear?*

spirit will support us under bodily sicknesses and outward afflictions: but if the mind it self have lost its courage, and become abject, cast down and oppressed with grief and sadness; it is not in the power of man to raise and lift it up.

15. *The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.*

for himself, will take the greatest care, to possess his mind with the true knowledge of God, and of his duty to him: and be so wise as to listen to those that can

11. The worldly-minded man indeed thinks otherwise, and places his security in

12. When a man's spirit grows lofty by prosperity, forgetting God, and despising

13. He that is so forward as to answer to a business before he hath heard the state

14. There is a vast difference between outward and inward evils; for a manly

15. He (therefore) that hath so much understanding, as to consider what is good

give him right information, for it is this alone, that can preserve the mind from being dejected and broken.

16. *A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.*

fires, by gifts and presents: which will procure his enlargement, if he be in prison; and more than that, bring him into favour with great men; nay, purchase him the honour to wait upon Princes.

17. *He that is first in his own cause, seemeth just: but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.*

bour; till he come also to examine his information, and open the whole matter before the Judge: nay more than this, he hath a great advantage who first possesses the Judge's mind, with the justice of his cause; for it will not be easie for his adversary to find out his tricks and to confute him, without a diligent search and curious inquiry into what he hath alledged. See Arg. [g].

18. *The lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty.*

strong on both sides, or the parties contending both very powerfull to maintain their pretensions: and then the casting of lots is an equal way to determine the controversie; and put each of them in quiet possession of that which falls to his share.

19. *A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.*

refractory when they have transgressed against each other, that it is easier to take a strong City, or to break the bars of a Castle; than it is to compose their differences, and remove all the obstructions that lie in the way to their hearty reconciliation.

16. There is no man so mean but he may make his way, whithersoever he de-

17. A man may seem to have a good cause, who hath got the start of his neigh-

18. But in some cases it is very hard to make an end of suits; where the reasons are

19. But there are no contentions so sharp and obstinate, as those among Brethren: who grow so

20. *A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled.*

20. The Tongue is so hard to govern, and so much depends upon it, that (it cannot be too oft repeat-

ed XII. 14. XIII. 2.) we ought to take as great care about the words we speak, as we do about the fruit of our Trees, or the increase of the earth, which we are to eat; for according as they are wholesome and good, or unsavoury and bad; so will the pleasure or the pain be, wherewith we shall be filled.

21. *Death and life are in the power of the tongue; and they that love it, shall eat the fruit thereof.*

21. The good or the harm that the Tongue can doe, both to a man's self and

unto others, is more than can be expressed; for many have cut their own throats by incautious words, when others have remained safe by silence, or brought themselves off from danger by prudent answers: in like manner by false accusations it destroys other men, or saves them by testifying the truth; and this may be laid down for a general Rule, that they who love to talk much shall suffer by it.

22. *Who so findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.*

22. He who hath married a wife, that is truly a help meet for him, hath met

with a most excellent blessing: and ought thankfully to acknowledge the singular favour of God, in guiding his mind to make so happy a choice. See Arg. [h].

23. *The poor useth intreaties, but the rich answereth roughly.*

23. Boldness doth not become a Beggar, but modest intreaties

and dolefull supplications, which is the proper language of the poor and miserable: and if they meet with a stern or harsh answer from the rich, it is no wonder; and they must still humbly deprecate their displeasure.

24. *A man that hath friends, must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.*

24. A friendly person is prone to doe all neighbourly offices; which is the very

end of friendship, and the way to preserve it: and such a friend is sometimes found, who loves so heartily; that he sticks closer to his Friend in any streight, and assists him more faithfully than a Brother.

CHAP. XIX.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *This Chapter begins with a comparison between the Rich and the Poor; whom, in another regard, he had compared together in the last verse but one of the foregoing Chapter. The sence is plain enough; and it is, μία τῶν παροιμιῶν σοφῶς εἶχουσι, one of those Proverbs, which contains much wisdom in it, as Greg. Nazianzen speaks (Orat. XXVI. p. 458, 459.) who applies it unto "Christians of mean understanding, and "simple speech; that understand not λόγων σοφῶς; "neither the instances of Pyrrho, nor the Syllogisms "of Chrysippus; nor the depraved cunning of Aristotle's Arts, nor the witchery of Plato's Eloquence: "which like the Egyptian plagues had infested the "Church. There is no need, says he, of any of these: but "a poor man that walks in his simplicity (ὁ πῆνς ἐν ἀ- "γῶ καὶ γνώσει, as he paraphraseth it, poor in discourse, "and reasoning and knowledge) and relies upon plain "simple words, is much better (and will in this way be "saved, as in a small Cogboat) than a Fool (for he is "no better) that knows how to wind and turn every way "in his discourse; and most unlearnedly trusts to his demonstrations, &c. But this must be acknowledged not to be the literal sence of the words, but onely an accommodation of them to his purpose: which was to represent how commendable simplicity is in Religion, and inquiries of Faith; as well as in all things else. Not that a man should content himself to be ignorant, but onely,*

only, that he should not be too curious and subtil in his disquisitions.

[b] For Solomon, in the next verse, observes two great springs of all our miscarriages; want of understanding, and want of deliberation. To make too much haste in a business, is the way not to speed (according to the known Proverb) and to run blindly upon any thing, is no less prejudicial to us in our undertakings. That's the meaning of the first word, which we translate also: both he that affects things without knowledge, and he that pursues what he understands, without deliberation; run into many mistakes, and commit many sins. So some render the word *Nephes* (Soul) the desire of the Soul, the appetite, which must be always governed by prudence; or else it will run a man upon rocks, and precipitate him into ruin. For which miscarriage, he shews in the next verse (v. 3.) he must blame none but himself; and never in the least reflect upon God, as if He were negligent of us, or hard to us: which men are prone to think, when they have foolishly undone themselves.

[c] Then follows an observation, which he had made before, XIV. 20. but here repeats, in different words, over and over again, v. 4, 6, 7. For it is a lamentable thing to see how little true Friendship there is in the world; most men altering and changing together with the fortune (as we call it) of those whom they pretend to love. If they be rich, they are courted by every body; but poverty shews how insincerely. The Books of all ancient Authors are full of such Sentences; which I shall not so much as mention. [d] But note that in the midst of these, he inserts (v. 5.) an observation (which he had formerly made) of a greater wickedness in humane nature; which moves them either publickly to accuse others falsely, or secretly to backbite them; neither of which shall escape unpunished. For there is no word so secret that shall go for nought, and the mouth that belyleth, slayeth the Soul; as the Wisdom

of Solomon excellently speaks I. 11. This is repeated also again in this very Chapter, v. 9. with the alteration onely of one word. The reason of which is, that Solomon (as I have noted before) using often the same axioms, sometimes varied the phrase, though not the sence: and the Collectours of his sayings, thought good to set down his different forms of speech, for the same thing. In both verses, the LXX plainly understand him to speak of such lyes as are pernicious and hurtfull to others: and in the latter of them, they take the destruction which the Wise man threatens unto such lyars, to arise from their own wicked words. And so I have expressed it in my Paraphrase. There are those, who think that this Sentence is repeated in the ninth verse, as an admonition to the rich men spoken of in the verses foregoing: who break their promises with those that depend upon them; and give good words, when there is no need of them: but will do no good, when men call for their assistance. These shall suffer for their falseness. But this seems to be strain'd; and not agreeable to the meaning of the Hebrew Text.

[e] That which follows (v. 10.) is a notable admonition of the confused and disordered state of things, here in this present world: wherein we too often see men void of wit or goodness, wallowing in pleasure; that is, abounding in all things that can gratifie their senses, which they please most absurdly: and mean men getting into power, and lording it over their betters, &c. These things are very unseemly, saith Solomon; and the latter of these more unseemly than the former: but so it will be, unless men become wise and good; for most are made worse by prosperity, which they know not how to use. Therefore it is a true Rule of the Son of Sirach XXXIII. Eccclus. 24. Fodder, a wand and burthens for an Ass: and bread, correction and work for a Slave. Every one is best in the condition that is proper for him: and therefore a Slave should be kept under;
and

and a brutish Sot be restrained from taking all his pleasure. For no man is fit to govern another, that cannot govern himself, as the next verse intimates: And the more power any man hath, the harder it is for him to command his passions: which may be suggested in the twelfth [f] verse; for the young Lion to whom a King is compared, as he is the strongest, so is the fiercest of all other.

From hence the Wise man passes to some domestick observations v. 13, 14, 15, 18, 19. Upon which if I should make any remarks, it would extend this Preface beyond its just bounds. The skilfull Reader will see where I have put two sences together: which I could not do in the twenty third verse; and therefore shall here give a short account of it.

[g] All Interpreters, except one, understand it as our Translation hath rendred it; by supplying a word before, abideth satisfied. Onely Lud. de Dieu thinks the parts of this verse are opposite; as the rest use to be: and by that word which we translate satisfied (which signifies full in the Hebrew Language) understands proud and haughty people (as they who are rich are too prone to be) who are here opposed to him that fears God; as they are in Luk. I. 50, 51, 53. And the Paraphrase will run thus; He that is possessed with such a religious sence of God, that he fears to offend Him, is a most happy man: but he that is swoln with pride and forgets God, when worldly goods flow in upon him, shall lie down at last in sorrow; and never want something or other to afflict him. And something of this sence the LXX. seem to have had in their mind; who make the members of this verse opposite, as he doth; understanding by *שׂוֹבֵר* full, he that hath no fear of God. For so their Translation runs; the fear of the Lord is to a man's life, *ὁ φόβος τοῦ κυρίου ζωὴ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, &c. but he that is without fear (viz. of God) shall abide in places, where there is no knowledge

to govern him, i. e. run blindly into all manner of mischief.

[h] The next verse is a most elegant, but hyperbolical, description of a man that hath given up himself to sloth : who refuses to doe things, as easie as to pull his hand out of his bosome; and as necessary as to eat and drink. This being the plain sence, I have not varied from the common translation of the word zalláchath ; which every where signifies a pot, or dish, or something like it ; and can onely by a metaphor be applied to the bosom, or arm-holes. But we must either so understand it, or else take the first word taman, hide, in a very improper sence : for there can be no cause for biding the hand in a pot. Therefore we must either translate it as we do ; or else understand by hide, putting, or thrusting the hand into the pot or dish ; and thus translate the whole verse : A sluggard puts his hand into the dish ; but will not so much as move it from thence unto his mouth.

[i] The next verse, as Melancthon well notes, is an observation concerning the way of amending the world. Some are so bad, they must be handled with great sharpness : especially such prophane men, as with an Epicurean contempt deride admonition, and grow thereby more furious. But there are those who grow better, even by the examples of severity against notorious Offenders : As the Gibeonites, came and sought peace, when they saw their neighbours destroyed : and the punishment of Sifamnes made Otanes more cautious, when he was placed in the Seat covered with his Predecessour's skin ; as Herodotus relates in his Terpsichore. But then there are a third sort, who need not so much ; but being admonished, are obedient to those that tell them of their faults. To such a reproof, at the most is sufficient.

[k] In the two next verses, I have had respect to both constructions, of which they are capable. But in v. 28.

I have

I have omitted the sense, which some great Hebricians give of the words; as if an ungodly witness sought one-ly by false colours to deceive the Judge, and thereby pervert judgment. For a witness of Belial, seems to me rather to signifie such an impudent Varlet, as sticks not boldly to testifie to the grossest lyes.

1. **B**etter is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.

to be commended, than him that gathers great riches by fraud and circumvention: which he takes to be cunning, but will prove folly in the end. See Arg. [a].

2. *Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good; and he that hasteth with his feet, sinneth.*

ought to chuse, and what to avoid, can never doe well: and if a man hastily and unadvisedly pursue an end (which he reasonably propounds to himself) and will not take time to deliberate, he must needs commit many errors. See Arg. [b].

3. *The foolishness of man perverteth his way: and his heart fretteth against the LORD.*

error after all the rest; that when his own folly, and perhaps wickedness, hath led him to many misfortunes, he imagines God is unkind to him: and is vexed, not at himself but at the Divine Providence; against which he perpetually murmurs.

4. *Wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbour.*

hath most need of them is so far from

1. **A** Poor man who acts sincerely, and hath no guile in his mouth, is far happier and more

2. Ignorance and inconsideration, are equally mischievous; for a mind that knows not what it

3. Yet he is unwilling to take the blame upon himself, but commits this grand

4. Together with Riches, a man gets many (and perhaps great and powerful) Friends, though he had none before: but he that getting any, that, if he

he had one, he loses even him, when, he grows poor. See Arg. [c].

5. *A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lyes, shall not escape.*

at last with a just punishment: nor privately calumniates, and vents his malice in lyes to the prejudice of his neighbour. See Arg. [d].

6. *Many will intreat the favour of the prince; and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.*

with the humblest submissions: and every one loves, or pretends to love him; whose liberality is so well known every where, that it hath procured him the name of a bountifull giver.

7. *All the brethren of the poor do hate him: how much more do his friends go far from him? he pursueth them with words, yet they are wanting to him.*

ny, as a disgrace or a trouble to them; and therefore no wonder if his companions and familiars grow strange to him: He urges them with their former protestations or promises of kindness, but finds they signified nothing; and if he earnestly implore their pity it is to no purpose.

8. *He that getteth wisdom, loveth his own soul: he that keepeth understanding, shall find good.*

accordingly to store his mind with vertuous principles, is the truest lover of himself: and if he strictly observe them, and conduct his life by those rules, he shall find the profit of it.

9. *A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lyes, shall perish.*

find him out, shall be punished by God: and he who privately

5. A false Witness, who fears not in open Court to accuse the innocent, shall meet shall he escape, who malice in lyes to the

6. A Prince never wants suitors for his favour, which the greatest persons seek

7. All the kindred of a poor man not onely forsake him (as was observed before v. 4. and XIV. 20.) but hate his compa-

8. He that is so considerate, as to value Wisdom above Riches, and accor-

9. He that testifies to a lye, to the perverting of justice, if the Judge do not

privately whispers slanders against his neighbours, and kindles strife and contention among them, shall perish by those wicked practices.

10. *Delight is not seemly for a fool: much less for a servant to have rule over princes.* 10. Pleasure doth not become a man void of understanding; who is never

more ridiculous than when he can doe what he list: and yet Empire less becomes a vile Slave; who is most intolerably insolent, when he can wantonly domineer over the greatest persons. See Arg. [e].

11. *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.* 11. The world thinks him stupid, who is patient; and without sence of honour,

who passes by injuries: but the more understanding any man hath, the slower he is to anger; and the greater his Spirit is, the greater his glory and praise, not to revenge a wrong, when he hath opportunity.

12. *The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion; but his favour is as dew upon the grass.* 12. But none find it more difficult than a King, especially in the heat of his youth,

to bridle his wrath; the signification of which is as dreadfull to his Subjects, as the roaring of the young Lyon to the rest of the Beasts: and on the other side, any token of his favour and kindness is so comfortable, that as the dew restores those herbs, which were parched by the hot beams of the Sun; so it revives those who were almost struck dead with the terror of his rage. See Arg. [f].

13. *A foolish son is the calamity of his father; and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.* 13. Two things make a man exceeding unhappy; a dissolute Son and a

scolding Wife: for the former breaks the heart of his Father, to see him like to prove the utter destruction of his Family: and the other drives a man to undoe his Family himself, when he is no more able to live at home with her, than to dwell in a rotten and ruinous house, through the roof of which the rain drops perpetually.

14. *House and riches are the inheritance of fathers; and a prudent wife is from the LORD.*

14. The singular Providence of God therefore is to be acknowledged, in a virtuous Wife; which is not so easie to get as an estate. For an house, with all its furniture, and land belonging to it may descend upon us, without our thought, from our progenitours: but great care and prudence is required in the choice of a Wife, that knows how to manage a Family aright; who is not found neither, without the peculiar direction and blessing of the Lord.

15. *Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.*

15. As labour makes men vigorous and rich, so sloth and idleness hath these two miserable effects: that it insensibly sinks the mind into a dull stupidity and unconcernedness about the most necessary things; and thereby reduces them unto extreme beggary and want, To which may be added a *third*; that it tempts men to shirk, and use dishonest arts for a livelihood.

16. *He that keepeth the commandment, keepeth his own soul; but he that despiseth his ways, shall die.*

16. He that carefully observes the commandments of God, as the rule of his life, hath a due care of himself, and consults his Soul's safety: but he that minds not what he doth, despising all order and rules of life, is regardless of his own good, and will be very miserable.

17. *He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given, will he pay him again.*

17. He that takes compassion on the poor and relieves his necessities, doth not impoverish but enrich himself. For the Lord looks upon what is given to the poor as lent unto Him: and He will not fail to make him a full compensation; or rather return the benefit he hath done to others, with large interest and increase of blessings, upon him and his posterity.

18. *Chasten*

18. *Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.*

18. Give due and timely correction to thy Son for his faults, before he hath gotten

an habit of them, and there be little hope of his amendment: but neither proceed to such cruel usage of him, as to make him weary of life, and not to care what becomes of him; nor yet be moved merely by his roaring to abate of thy necessary severity towards him.

19. *A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment: for if thou deliver him, yet thou must do it again.*

19. For he whose wrath exceeds all bounds, and makes him severe beyond

measure, undoes his Child, and consequently himself (nay all men that are immoderately angry bring great mischiefs upon themselves, and if you help them out of one danger, it doth not make them cautious, but they run into a new trouble) and yet if he do not punish him at all, he tempts him to go on in his sin; and the same case, whether he shall punish him or no, will return again.

20. *Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayst be wise in thy latter end.*

20. Listen unto good advice, and be not impatient of reproof; no nor of cor-

rection for thy faults: but receive all thankfully; and learn thereby that wisdom which will doe thee service, when all things else will fail thee.

21. *There are many devices in a mans heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.*

21. There are many designs and contrivances in the minds of men, which they

think are so well laid that they cannot miscarry: but are all defeated by the over-ruling counsel of the Lord; which alone can inevitably bring to pass whatsoever it pleases.

22. *The desire of a man is his kindness: and a poor man is better than a liar.*

22. There is nothing more desirable to a man, than to have wherewithall to

be kind to others, and oblige his Friends and neighbours; for nothing makes him more beloved: but it is better to want this power, than to have it, and have no will to doe good;

good; no not to those to whom we have made great professions and promises of love and kindness.

23. *The fear of the LORD* 23. Nothing makes
tendeth to life, and he that hath a man lead so happy
it shall abide satisfied: he shall not a life as a religious
be visited with evil. care to please the
Lord in all things;

which is attended with abundance of blessings, but especially with inward satisfaction of mind: which makes a man sleep quietly and securely; without fear of any evil that can invade him. See Arg. [g].

24. *A slothfull man hideth his* 24. All things seem
hand in his bosom, and will not so fo difficult to a lazy
much as bring it to his mouth again. wretch, who indulges
himself in sloth

and loves his ease; that he would not willingly pull his hands from under his arms; no, not to put his meat into his mouth. See Arg. [h].

25. *Smite a scorner, and the* 25. Punish a de-
simple will beware; and reprove one ruder of Religion se-
that hath understanding, and he verely; and though
will understand knowledge. it doe him no good,

yet those incautious persons whom he hath deluded, will be awakened by it to greater circumspection: but it is sufficient onely to chide a well-disposed person for his faults; of which he himself will receive the benefit, and learn to amend them. See Arg. [i].

26. *He that wasteth his father,* 26. A Son that
and chaseth away his mother, is a leads a debauched
son that causeth shame, and bring- life, too often wastes
eth reproach. all his Father's estate;

Mother out of doors, or makes her weary of the house: which is so disgracefull, that it makes them ashamed to shew their heads; and will bring him to greater confusion at the last.

27. *Cease, my son, to bere the* 27. My Son, be-
instruction that causeth to err from ware of their dis-
the words of knowledge. course, who, under
the

the shew of greater learning, seduce thee from the plain doctrines of Vertue; or if thou hast been unhappily engaged in such company, quit it presently, and stick to those that honestly instruct thee: for remember this; to leave off hearing the instruction of good men, is the first step towards a departure from all Religion.

28. *An ungodly witness scorneth judgment: and the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.*

28. A wicked witness, who hath perfectly discharged all sense of good and e-

vil, mocks if you tell him of Law and Justice, or of the judgment of God upon perjured persons: for there is no iniquity so great, but there are men as lewdly impious; who not so much as boggle at it, but will swallow it down as glibly, as drunkards do their liquor. See Arg. [k].

29. *Judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools.*

29. But they shall not mock always; for terrible punishments shall certainly be in-

flicted upon those that scoff at Conscience and Religion: nor shall other wicked men escape, who are such fools as to slight these good instructions; but feel at last to their smart, the dolefull effects of their sin, in indelible marks of the divine displeasure.

CHAP. XX.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *The first precept in this Chapter is against Drunkenness, as an enemy to Wisdom, even in common things; much more in those of everlasting consequence: For that it commonly expells out of mens minds all reverence both to God, and to others, inclining them to take the licence to say or doe any thing without restraint or discretion; and what unruly passions it excites when the brain is disturbed with it, is known to all, and need not be here recited.*

recited. The word *Homeh* which Solomon here uses, and which we render raging or outrageous, includes them all: signifying that discomposed, unquiet and restless state of mind; which expresses it self in some wild motion or other, according as men are naturally inclined. But nothing worse can be said of it, than this that it makes men either stupid sots, or profane scoffers at Religion and all sobriety.

[b] Next to this he advises every man to take heed, how he suffers himself to be drunk with anger. For nothing else but an intoxication therewith, can make a man so distracted, as to fly in the face of Majesty. For so that word *hithabber* properly signifies, not to provoke the King (though most Interpreters, even Bochartus himself, so render it) but to be angry at him: which is a kind of madness: For thereby he is provoked to such fury, as is in young Lyons, who are the fiercest of all others. I have therefore expressed both senses of the word.

[c] In the next verse I take *ilh* to signifie a more than ordinary man; one of the highest rank; and that in Wisdom: For it is opposed to a fool; and therefore so I have expounded it.

[d] As I have also understood it in v. 5. where Solomon observes that there are no men so cunning, but there are others as subtil to find them out. Concerning which art of finding out men, the Great Lord Bacon hath given many notable rules (in his second Chapter of the VIII Book of the Advancement of Learning) for though the knowledge it self falls not under precepts, because it is of Individuals; yet instructions for the deducing of it may be given. And he observes six ways whereby the knowledge of men may be drawn out and disclosed. By their faces and countenances; by words; by deeds; by their nature; by their ends; and by the relations of others. What he says upon these heads, the Reader may there find. I shall onely mention
this

this single observation of his; That the weakest and simplest sort of men, are best interpreted by their Natures (according to which they commonly act) but the wisest and most reserved, are best expounded by their ends and aims.

[e] *The next verse is very variously expounded; but our Translation seems to come nearest to the sence of the Hebrew words: Which may admit also of this construction; which approaches nearer than any other, beside that which we follow. It is the common inclination of mankind, when they are in need or danger, to call for relief or help from him, whom they have obliged: but there are very few, that in such a condition will approve themselves to be faithfull friends.*

[f] *The Eleventh verse also may be expounded quite contrary ways. Because the word ithnakker signifies both to make ones self known, and to make ones self a stranger, unto others. All the ancient interpreters follow, as ours doth, the first sence; which seems most genuine: for Nature commonly betrays its inclinations in children so plainly, and they are so strong and violent, that they cannot dissemble them. Yet that (which is the other) is no absurd sence; which some give of these words, Even children are so cunning, as to hide their inclinations: and therefore it is not easie to guess in their childhood, what they will prove when they come to man's estate. But this is not so common as the other.*

[g] *The next verse some good Interpreters expound wholly, concerning the happiness a people is in, when the Subjects are so humble, that they are inclined meekly to obey their Superiours; and their Superiours so wise, that they solicitously provide for their safety and good Government. Thus Melancthon observes, that in Government these two things must concurr; Good Counsel in the Governours, and Obedience in the People: both of which So-*

lomon acknowledges to be the gift of God. Nay, both these, saith he, must concur in a King; who must not onely have good counsellors, but be inclined also to hearken to them, or else he will not be happy. Jeremiah was an excellent Monitor, but Zedekiah would not be ruled by him; and so Jerusalem was destroyed: as on the other side, Hezekiah in former times, hearkened to Isaiah, and then it was preserved. Hæc est principalis sententia hujus dulcissimi dicti. But rather look upon this to be, that which they call a tropical sence, not the literal; and therefore I onely note it here, together with this wholesom Admonition of that Author which follows: That Kingdoms cannot be well governed onely by humane Wisdom; but the Assistance of God must be implored both in giving of counsel, and in bowing the wills of men to Obedience, and in governing events.

[h] The fourteenth verse is alledged by the Lord Bacon, as an instance of one of the mere colours of good and evil: teaching us that all is not good which men praise; nor all bad which they discommend. For as fraud, the Wise man here observes, makes them dispraise that, to which they have a mind: so in other cases, out of ignorance, or out of partiality, or faction, nay sometimes from natural disposition, men both disparage that which is praise-worthy, and commend that which is good for little.

But there are other Authors, who give a quite different sence of these words; particularly Luther and Melancthon: who by *koneh* do not understand a buyer; but an owner or possessor. And imagine the meaning of this Proverb to be, that men are not wont to like that which they enjoy; but after God hath taken it away from them, then they commend the happiness they have lost. The last named Writer, heaps up abundance of excellent sentences out of the Ancients, like this of Thucydides, *αἰὶν τὸ παρὸν βαρὺ*, the present is always grievous.

grievous. Which arises out of fickleness and inconstancy; or because they are cloyed with what they have long enjoyed; or are impatient of some inconveniencies in their present state; but chiefly out of inconsideration, that all conditions will have something troublesome in them; and out of great unthankfulness to God, and insensibleness of his Providence, which disposes things better than we can do our selves. But the word *jithhallel*, which we translate *boast*, scarce admits of this sense; and therefore I have not taken notice of it in the Paraphrase.

[i] Whether *peninim* in the next verse, signifies *Rubies*, or *Pearls*, or any other sort of precious stone, or none in particular, is not very material: but *Bochart* I think hath demonstrated that it signifies *Pearls* (*Part II. L. V. C. 6. de Sacr. An.*) and therefore I have so translated it. And it is not an impertinent argument, which he alledges for this (*cap. 8.*) that *Wisdom* in the Scripture is frequently compared to *Pearls*, or preferred before them; as it is here in this place.

[k] In the seventeenth verse, under the name of bread of deceit, may be comprehended all things got wrongfully: which though they may please a man in the beginning, will bring sorrow and pain in the conclusion: and therefore so I have expressed it in the Paraphrase.

[l] There is little difficulty in the verses that follow till we come to the 25 verse. Where the vulgar Latin hath been so extremely corrupted, that various interpretations have thence arisen of a very plain sentence, as the words run in the Hebrew. Which are directed against *Sacrilege*, as *Protestant Writers* universally acknowledge. A corruption (saith *Mr. Cartwright himself*) which never more infested the World than in this age: in which most men, not onely give nothing; but doe all they can to taken away from that which their Ancestors have give to the service of God, and the support of his Ministers, of Schools, or of the Poor.

By which they are guilty not onely of their own destruction; but of the loss of the souls of others. *The only difference between them herein is, that some take the words to be a censure of the hypocritical wickedness of such, as after they have committed sacrilege, and such like sins, think to make God an amends by Vows, and Sacrifices and Prayers.*

Thus Luther and Melancthon, and among the Reformed (as they are called) de Dieu, who adds this new conjecture, that the first word Mokesch may be interpreted by a snare, i. e. fraudulently and craftily; and then the sense is this: A sacrilegious man finds devices to rob God, of things that are consecrated to Him: and then makes vows, in hope by them to expiate his sacrilege. The whole sentence he also observes may be otherways disposed: but it seems to be so forced and unusual that I shall not mention it.

[m] *The like variety of interpretations, the mistake of the vulgar Latin hath produced in the next verse. Which seems to intend no more than this, That a Good King separates the bad from the good, by a due execution of his Laws: which is like the winnowing of the corn, after the chaff is separated from it, by drawing the wheel over it. For as the flail is the instrument among us of beating the corn out of the husk; so in those hot Countries, they made this separation by a wheel drawn by Oxen over it: which both pressed out the corn, and broke the straw; as may be seen in XXVIII Isa. 27, 28. and many other places, which our learned Countryman N. Fuller hath explained in his Miscellanies (L. VI. Cap. 12.) and Dr. Hammond hath applied to that place of the Psalmist LXXVIII Psal. 13. though it seemed to me there, to have another meaning.*

Others by the wheel understand here such a sore punishment as that mentioned 2 Sam. VIII. 2. XII. 31. and then the meaning is, He will use the utmost rigour to extirpate the wicked, and fright men from their wickedness.

[n] *The*

[n] *The plainest sence also of v. 27. seems to be that in our Translation: the latter part of which the Lord Bacon (with some others) referr to the inquisitive search of man's mind into all manner of things. " For though " the Wise man says (in the III Ecclesiastes) that it " is impossible for man to find out all the Works of " God; yet this doth not derogate from the capacity " of man's mind, but may be referred to the impediments of knowledge (such as the shortness of life, " janglings among learned men, and refusing to join " their Studies and Labours, unfaithfull and depraved " tradition of Sciences, with many other inconveniences, " wherein this present state is intangled) for that no " parcel of the world is denied to man's enquiry, or invention he declares in another place; where he saith, " the Spirit of man is as the lamp of God; where- " with he searcheth into the inwards of all secrets. Thus he in the beginning of his Advancement of Learning. Which, if it be not the full import of the words, is nearer than that sence which others give of them; who by the candle of the Lord, understand either the knowledge of God himself, which penetrates into the secrets of all mens thoughts; or else his divine favour and love, the sence of which marvellously recreates and refreshes the soul; and is as it were the life of man, penetrating through his whole body.*

[o] *Upon the next verse Kab-venaki hath this note; that by chesed, the mercy, which Solomon here commends unto a King we are to understand, an exceeding great excess of goodness, and kindness; even towards those who are not worthy of it: and by Emeth truth, his keeping his word exactly, and loving and sincerely practising this vertue. Which two will keep him from all harm; but it is that excessive degree of goodness alone; which establishes and settles him in the throne of his Kingdom. A Proverb directly contrary to the wicked Maxims of Matchiavel, as Schickard observes in his Mischpat Hammelech, Cap. IV.*

[p] *The last verse some take to be a description of the depraved condition of humane Nature; which makes men as loth to be cured of their sins, by sharp and severe rebukes, &c. as to be beaten till lumps be raised in the flesh, &c. So they make Tamrick bera, the cleansing or scouring of an evil man, to be the subject of which he speaks. And then the Paraphrase should run thus, To rub up a wicked man, and chide him soundly for his sins; is as grievous to him as to beat him till he be bruised; and so sore, that he complains his very bowels are hurt and in anguish by it. This I have not wholly neglected; but yet followed the common Exposition: which is, that the severest corporal punishments, are necessary for the cure of some offenders.*

1. **W**ine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby, is not wise.

excess of Wine, and such-like liquors; which is inconsistent with it: For drunkenness not onely disposes a man to be abusive and scurrilous, in deriding even things most serious and sacred; but to be so furious, tumultuous and quarrelsome, as declares him both to be a fool, and incapable of being otherwise. See Arg. [a].

2. *The fear of a King is as the roaring of a Lion; whoso provoketh him to anger, sinneth against his own soul.*

do at the roaring of a young Lion, which comes with open jaws to devour them: It is best therefore to submit to him; for whosoever provokes him, especially by angry and exasperating language, brings his own life (as well as his soul) into very great danger. See Arg. [b].

3. *It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling.*

1. **L**ET him whose design it is to be wise and good, take heed of accustoming himself to

2. The displeasure of a King strikes terror into men and makes them tremble, as they are wont to

3. It is below a wise man, or one that is truly great to scold and

and brawl; or if a quarrel be begun, it is no disparagement to him (but the noblest thing he can doe) to with-draw himself from it, and let it rest: but all fools and lewd persons love to thrust themselves into contention; and fanſie, when they are ingaged in strife, they are bound in honour to maintain it. See Arg. [c].

4. *The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.*

taking; for instance, he will not rise to plough his ground in Autumn, when the morning air grows sharp, for fear of catching cold: by which means he exposes himself to far greater hardships; for in the harvest time, when plenty crowns the labours of other men, he turns beggar, and no body pities him, or will relieve him.

5. *Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water: but a man of understanding will draw it out.*

and intentions of another man, especially that hath a deep wit, are as hard to be sounded as Waters that lie in the secret Caverns of the Earth: yet there are persons of such penetrating understandings, and of so great a reach, that they will find means to discover them and draw them out. See Arg [d].

6. *Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?*

mankind value themselves very much upon the mere pretence of it; every one of them boasting what he hath done, or will do upon occasion: though, alas! in a time of trial, it is very hard to find so much as one of them, that will be as good as his word. See Arg. [e].

7. *The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.*

word; and so sincerely charitable, that he persevereth in

4. The smallest difficulty frights a lazy person from the most necessary under-

5. There is nothing but may be compassed by Wisdom. For though the designs

6. It is such an honour to be kind and to do good to others, that a great part of

7. But whosoever he be, that is indued with this rare vertue of being just to his his

his vertue to the end of his days; he shall not onely fare the better for it, and enjoy great satisfaction in himself, while he lives; but his children after him shall reap the happy fruits, of his unfeigned love to God and man.

8. *A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment, scattereth away all evil with his eyes.*

8. A Prince attentive to his peoples good, who doth not give up himself to

pleasure, nor abandon all his care of the affairs to his Ministers, but sits constantly himself to do justice to his people; prevents a world of mischief by his very presence in the courts of judgment: and by his strict observance how things are carried, and carefull search into mens causes, keeps both Judges and Pleaders, and all men else within the bounds of their duty; and applies fitting and seasonable remedies to all the publick grievances.

9. *Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?*

9. There is no man so perfect, that he hath nothing left to

doe; for who can say, and say truly, that he hath not the least evil affection remaining in him, no unruly passion stirring in his soul? Or that he is so free from every sin, that he needs no further purifying?

10. *Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the LORD.*

10. It is not so small a sin as men imagine to cheat, and cozen their neigh-

bours; for instance, to buy by a weight or a measure too heavy and big, and to sell by those that are too light and scanty: for these are alike displeasing to the Lord; nay such injustice is detestible to Him beyond expression.

11. *Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.*

11. It is not hard to give a shrewd conjecture, what a child is like to prove when

he is a man: For not onely youths, but little children, make early discoveries, by their behaviour, by their contrivances, by their dealings one with another; nay, by their

very

very sports and pastimes, and such things wherein they delight, whether their future life will probably be modest and honest; free, that is, from lasciviousness, impurity, and such like vices; and void also of fraud, and guile, and malignity of spirit. *See Arg. [f].*

12. *The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.*

those excellent and usefull senses whereby the knowledge of all things is conveyed to us: So the towardly disposition which we observe to be in any child, to listen to instruction, and a clear understanding to discern, with a sound judgment to resolve aright, are likewise, above all things, to be peculiarly ascribed to the divine Grace. *See Arg. [g].*

13. *Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty: open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.*

improvement of those faculties, or good inclinations He hath given us. And therefore let not idleness make thee indulge thy self in too much sleep; which is the way to beggary: but get up betime, and apply thy self, with attentive care, to some honest labour; and then thy desire of all things necessary shall not want satisfaction.

14. *It is nought, it is nought, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.*

he cheapens a commodity, he disparages it to such a degree, as if he thought it nothing worth: but having purchased it, upon his own terms, he goes away and brags how subtil he was; and laughs at the simplicity of him that sold it, at so vile a rate. *See Arg. [h].*

15. *There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.*

treasures of Gold, or perhaps heaps of Pearls, or other precious Stones: but among all the Jewels, or ornaments, or furniture

12. As the Lord is to be acknowledged the fountain of all good; particularly of

13. But our Industry must be joined with God's blessing, in the faithfull im-

14. The buyer sometimes is as unjust and deceitfull as the seller (v. 10.) for when

15. Some think themselves rich, and powerfull, and happy, because they have

furniture that are most esteemed, there is none comparable unto true Wisdom; especially joined with Eloquence; which can doe more than them all. See Arg. [i].

16. *Take his garment that is surety for a stranger: and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.* 16. It is rank folly to trust him, who is so rash as to be bound for one, whose ability

and fidelity is utterly unknown to him; especially for a woman whose loose way of life, makes her credit justly suspected: therefore have nothing to doe with such an inconsiderate person, without the utmost security that he can give thee, for the payment of what he owes thee.

17. *Bread of deceit is sweet to a man: but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.* 17. Do not satisfy thy appetite of wealth, by fraud, lying or bribery; nor

thy desires of pleasure by adultery or fornication: For though this may be sweet for the present, it is but like the pleasure of greasy bread, which may relish well to an hungry man, when it is first tasted; but being chewed, hurts the palate, cuts the gums, or breaks the teeth, with the sharp and rough gravel that is in it. See Arg. [k].

18. *Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.* 18. Rashness spoils the best designs; which must be carried on prudently and

with good advice, if we would have them prove successfull: and above all other, war-like expeditions are not to be undertaken without great deliberation; nor can be well managed without exact conduct, and subtil contrivance: unto which the Victory is commonly more to be ascribed, than unto force.

19. *He that goeth about as a tale-bearer, revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.* 19. He whose trade it is to ingratiate himself by defaming others, will not stick most treacherously to

discover the secrets wherewith they have intrusted him (XI. 13.) Therefore suspect a fawning fellow, and have no familiarity with him; for his drift is, to intice thee to talk, what he intends to carry about to others.

20. *Who-*

20. *Whoſe curſeth his father or his mother, his lamp ſhall be put out in obſcure darkneſs.*

to his Father or Mother, ſhall bring the heaviest puniſhments on himſelf, and on his poſterity: who, the happier they were before, ſhall be the more miſerable, by falling from a flouriſhing, into the moſt diſmal condition.

21. *An inheritance may be gotten haſtily at the beginning: but the end thereof ſhall not be bleſſed.*

and ſtir, an eſtate may in a ſhort time be heaped up; yet the foundation of it being laid in rapine, extortion, or fraud, it moulders away many times as ſuddenly as it was gotten; and it is certain will not proſper unto many generations.

22. *Say not thou, I will recompence evil: but wait on the LORD, and he ſhall ſave thee.*

haſt received (of which thou art not the proper Judge, nor like to doe exact juſtice in it) but leave thy cauſe to the Lord, and expect his righteous ſentence: believing ſtedfaſtly He will not onely doe thee right; but defend thee from farther injuries; which thou ſanſieſt, perhaps, thou ſhalt invite by thy forgiving thoſe that are paſt.

23. *Divers weights are an abomination unto the LORD: and a false balance is not good.*

all honeſt men, but much more to the Lord: which was ſaid before (v. 10.) but is a ſin ſo heinous, and yet ſo commonly practiſed, that this is fit to be repeated again; that it is a moſt wicked thing to cheat another, though it be but in a little matter (v. XI. 1.)

24. *Man's goings are of the LORD, how can a man then underſtand his own way?*

20. He that not onely ſlights and deſpiſes, but reproaches, and wiſhes miſchief

21. Make not too much haſte to be rich; for though with a great deal of buſtle

22. Be patient, and do not ſo much as reſolve to take revenge for any injury thou

23. To buy by one weight and to ſell by another, is extremely odious not onely to

24. There is no man great or ſmall, that can take one ſtep towards any thing he deſigns,

designs, without the permission and direction also of the Lord: who over-rules their motions unto ends so far distant from mens thoughts, that it is impossible for them to know what the event shall be, of any thing they undertake.

25. *It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy: and after vows to make enquiry.*

them, in great troubles; nay bring ruin upon them. *First* when he makes no distinction between things holy and common; but converts that which was consecrated to God (the first fruits, suppose, or such-like sacred things) to his own proper use: And *secondly*, when he vows in his distress, to give something unto God; but having obtained his desires, studies how he may be loosed from his obligations. See Arg. [l].

26. *A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.*

chaff before the wind: but he disperses them all, and thrashes them (as we speak) so severely, that the Country is clean purged, and freed from such wicked wretches. See Arg [m].

27. *The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.*

lighted at the divine understanding, to guide and direct him in all his motions; and to make reflections upon them afterward: nay, to penetrate also into the most secret designs of other men, that he may not be deceived by them. See Arg. [n].

28. *Mercy and truth preserve the King: and his throne is upholden by mercy.*

for the security of his Government; are bounty and clemency, joined with justice and faithfulness to his Word: and

25. There are two pieces of prophane-ness, which intangle him that is guilty of

26. Such impious persons can no more stand before a Religious Prince, than the

27. That active spirit, which the Lord hath breathed into man, is like a torch

28. The best and strongest Guards for the preservation of a Prince's Person, and

and if either of the two be of greater force than the other, for their support and maintenance, it is an high degree of bounty and benignity; which settles him fast in all mens affections, and intails the kingdom upon his posterity. See Arg. [o].

29. *The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the gray head.* 29. That which makes young men honoured is their strength, and vigour,

and courage; whereby they are capable to serve for the defence of their Country: but that which makes old men venerable is their aged gravity and experience, which qualifies them to advise and consult for its safety.

30. *The blewness of a wound cleanseth away evil: so doe stripes the inward parts of the belly.* 30. It is impossible to mend some persons without blows; and those not gentle nei-

ther, but severe: And therefore though it be a very sharp and grievous remedy, which they by all means avoid, it must not be forbore; but they are rather to be beaten black and blew, and scourged till their very hearts ake, than not be cleansed from their impurity. See Arg. [p].

CHAP. XXI.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter begins with a Sentence, which Themistius, a Pagan Philosopher and Orator, seems to take notice of, and mention as very memorable in the Assyrian (as he is supposed to call the Hebrew) Writings: and commends to the thoughts of the Emperour Valens, in a speech he made to him Orat. IX. But if he had respect to this Proverb of Solomon's, he will not fully comprehend the sence of it; for he takes notice onely of a Prince's mind being in the custody, and under the guard of God. For thus he translates it, ὁ νῦν τῷ Βασιλείῳ

λέως ἐν τῇ Θεῷ παλάμῃ δεσφορεῖται, the mind of the King is kept in safe custody in the hand of God. From whence he draws this Inference, that a King ought to be very sensible what danger he is in, if he go about anything contrary to the mind of God; because he then is in peril to fall out of the hand, which preserves and keeps him. Nay, thou oughtest, O King (saith he) not onely to design nothing thy self, but what is holy; but they that are about thee ought to speak to thee nothing that is not so: For every word that comes to thy ears is written in his uncorrupted hand. But though this be a most excellent Admonition, worthy to be written in the hearts of all Princes, that it is very unbecoming to have any evil thing, any thing impure, or in the least blemished with cruelty or inhumanity, in that heart, which those most holy and most gracious and benign hands of God, carry in their keeping; yet there is a great deal more than these Assyrian Letters or Pictures, which he speaks of, express. For Solomon would have them, and us, sensible that they cannot manage things by their power, as they think good; but depend upon an higher cause, who orders all their motions, good and bad, to such ends as He proposes to himself; quite contrary to their intentions and inclinations. Which is an Instruction sufficient to correct the pride of the most absolute Monarch, and the Impatience of the most oppressed Subject.

[b] Next to which follows (v. 2.) a caution against thinking too well of our selves: which had been delivered before (XVI. 2.) but for the weightiness, I suppose, of the matter, and the proneness of men to flatter themselves, and not to judge sincerely of their own actions, is here again repeated.

And then there is a caution added (v. 3.) against Hypocrisie; which thinks to please God with ceremonies, without moral honesty.

[c] In the fourth verse the meaning is something uncertain,

tain, from the different acceptions of the word ner or nir: which the Greek, the Latin, and other Interpreters, translate not ploughing, or ploughed fields; but the light, the splendour of the wicked. I have had respect to both sences; understanding by ploughing, the study, contrivance and business of wicked men. And the Sentence may be inverted, in this manner: sin is the pride, the ambition, the glory and joy (or the business) of wicked men, That, upon which they value themselves, and for which they think themselves brave fellows, &c. is, that they dare doe wickedly: or we may make two Sentences of this verse, to this purpose; men that have proud and lofty thoughts, have very ambitious desires and an unsatiable appetite; which put them upon much wickedness: nay, the very business and employment of all wicked men (as well as their pleasure) is nothing but sin. And this word ner signifying a yoke, among the Chaldæans, Syrians and Arabians, Lud. de Dieu thinks this no improper sence: superciliousness, and swelling of the heart (or mind) is a yoke intolerable; and proper to the wicked. Castalio alone understands by sin, the effects of sin; to this sence: pride, and haughtiness of mind are deadly enemies to that happiness, and pleasure which the wicked pursue: for instead of making them greater, as they fantasie, they lay them low in all mens opinions, and expose them to their hatred, &c. I omit other Interpretations.

- [d] *In the seventh verse there are different opinions about the force of the word jegorem: most of which I have endeavoured to express in the Paraphrase. And there is no little obscurity in the next verse: but besides that sence which I have represented, the words are capable of another, which is as plain; viz. as the man is, so are his works; a man of tricks will act strangely (quite different from all the rules whereby we ought to govern our selves) but an honest man, you may know*

know where to have; for he acts conformable to the Laws of righteousness.

[e] *In the eleventh verse, de Dieu thinks both parts of it, ought to be referred to one and the same subject, viz. peti, the simple: who, saith Solomon (according to this construction of the words) may be instructed two ways. One is, by the punishments which are inflicted upon a Scornor; which works upon his fear: the other is, when he attends to the wise, and observes God's great goodness to him; which works upon his love. Wherein he seems to have respect also to another signification of the word bemaschil, besides that of attending to information and instruction: for it sometimes imports that happiness and prosperity, wherewith God blesses the wise and prudent. But that sence which I have followed in the Paraphrase, seems nearest to the Hebrew: and agrees best with what was said before, XIX. 25. And it being usual, in this Book, to repeat the same Sentence, in divers places, in different words; I have therefore kept to that sence. But if any like the other (which the Vulgar Lat. also follows, making both parts of the Sentence to respect the simple) the plainest interpretation of the latter part of it, seems to me to be this: when Instruction is given to the wise, the simple also learn something; by observing how diligently even the wise hearken to it. And in this sence the word Maschil, with lamed after it, is used in the next verse; the just considers the house of the wicked.*

[f] *Which, though it seem very plain, yet there are great varieties in the interpretation of it: because of the following part of the verse. In which many put in the word Jehovah, or God, to supply the sence (as we do) but without any necessity; there being a clear and obvious sence, (which I have expressed in the Paraphrase) without any such supplement; if we do but take the just man for a just Magistrate, and not for a private person.*

[g] *There*

[g] *There is little difficulty after this, till we come to the 24th verse; where he either gives this character of a Scorner, that he is proud and arrogant, and does all things in the wrath of his pride (as the words are in the Hebrew) or describes the proud and arrogant man to be a Scorner also, and full of haughty wrath. It is not of much concern, which way we take it; for the sense will, in a manner, be the same. I have expressed the Hebrew, as near as I could, in my Paraphrase; taking the construction thus: A proud and haughty person; who may well be called a scorner, proceeds furiously and unsufferably in all that he doth.*

[h] *In the last verse Solomon mentions the Horse instead of all warlike preparations: because it was the chief; and all nations placed much of their confidence in the number and strength of their Horses. But that the Israelites might not doe so too, there was a special provision made in their Law against it, XVII. Deut. 16. Notwithstanding which, they were so prone to this vain confidence, that Joshua in his Wars against the Canaanites boughed all the Horses he took, after a great Victory: that is, cut their ham-strings, and thereby made them unserviceable: which he did by an express command from God, XI. Josh. 6, 9. and the reason of it was, (as Kimchi well observes) to prevent a false conceit, which might have risen in the peoples mind; that they owed their good success to them, had they made use of those Horses in future Battels. Which Solomon also here indeavours to prevent: For, though he had a great number of Horses, to increase that splendour which was peculiar to him, above all Kings; yet he would have them know he did not trust in them; nor would have the people imagine they were a whit the more secure, because they were so well appointed for War, if they did not carefully obey the Laws of God; and from him look for deliverance.*

1. **T**HE king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

they please; but their very wills are subject to the great Lord of all; who diverts them as easily from what they intend, or inclines them to that which they resolve against; as the Gardiner draws the streams of water, through the trenches he cuts, unto what part of the ground he thinks good. See Arg. [a].

2. Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.

but such is the fond affection he hath for himself) he fancies it to be exactly good: when in the account of the Lord, who searcheth into the secrets of mens Souls, and knows the just value of every thing, they are very defective, if not grossly wicked. See Arg. [b].

3. To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

farishe for their breach of faith, their uncharitableness and injurious actions towards men: when He prefers the practice of Truth, of Mercy and Justice before the richest Sacrifices that can be offered to Him.

4. An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked is sin.

and contrivances of wicked men, with all the prosperous successes they have in them, lead them into abundance of sins; and in the issue into no less miseries. See Arg. [c].

5. The thoughts of the diligent tend onely to plenteousness: but of every one that is hasty, onely to want.

1. **I**T is not in the power of Kings (much less of other men) either to doe, or to design, what

2. There is nothing that a man doth or designs (especially if he be great and po-

3. Men imagine, for example, that their devotion towards God, will sa-

4. The pride, the insolence, the ambition and vast desires; nay, all the designs

5. He that to prudent counsels and contrivances, adds an honest diligence, is likely

likely to grow rich: but he that acts inconsiderately in his business; or greedily catches at every advantage, whether by right or wrong; or undertakes more than he can manage, out of an eager desire to grow rich presently; is most likely to be a beggar.

6. *The getting of treasures by a lying tongue, is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.*

6. There are men that make it their business, with much labour, to heap up

wealth, though it be by lying, or flattery, or calumny, or perjury: but as such treasures are no more durable than heaps of chaff, or clouds of smoke, which are soon dissipated by the wind; so they expose the owners of them to many dangers, and at last bring them, by their own diligence, to a wofull end.

7. *The Robbery of the wicked shall destroy them; because they refuse to do judgment.*

7. For the rapine of such wicked men, whereby they have destroy'd other Families

and made them desolate, shall fall in most grievous and dreadful punishments upon themselves; which they shall not be able to shake off, till they be utterly destroyed; because they knowingly injured their neighbours, and obstinately denied to make them satisfaction.

8. *The way of man is froward and strange; but as for the pure, his work is right.*

8. For a man whose life is nothing but wiliness and craft, imposture and deceit,

is so alienated from God, that he is very odious to Him, and to all good men: but he that is sincere and free from all fraud and guile, approves himself in all his actions, and is most acceptable and dear to both. See Arg. [d].

9. *It is better to dwell in a corner of the house-top, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.*

9. It is much more desirable to live poorly and solitarily in the open air, expo-

sed to all the injuries of the weather; nay to be thrust into a little corner, on the top of the house; than to have a spacious habitation and numerous family, governed by a contentious wife: whose perpetual scolding and brawling,

within

within doors, upon the least occasion; is more intollerable than the thunder, and the lightning, and blustering winds, which may molest him without.

10. *The soul of the wicked desireth evil: his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes.*

10. An impious man is so set upon mischief, that he is not satisfied till he hath effected his desire: nor will he spare either Friend, or Foe, to serve his ambition, his covetousness, or whatsoever evil affection it is, that reigns in him.

11. *When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.*

11. Lay a heavy fine or other punishment, upon a derider of Religion; and though it doe him no good, yet such simple persons, as were onely incautiously deluded by him, will make some wise reflections on it, and be the better for it: as for him that is wise already, it is sufficient onely to give him good admonitions; of which he himself will receive the profit, and amend what is amiss in him. See Arg. [e].

12. *The righteous man wisely considereth the house of the wicked: but God overthroweth the wicked for their wickedness.*

12. A just Judge makes a prudent, but strict scrutiny, into all the actions of a wicked man's family; that he may so punish them for their rapine, violence and extortion; as to deprive them of all power to doe any further mischief. See Arg. [f].

13. *Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.*

13. He who is so far from relieving the poor, though they lie under most grievous calamities, that he plainly declares their petitions are very troublesome to him; shall fall into the like straits and pressures himself: and which is worse, be denied when they force him to cry for help.

14. *A gift in secret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the bosom, strong wrath.*

14. Men do not love to be thought so weak, as to doe any thing

thing for money; but such is its power, if it be secretly conveyed, that they will resign their strongest resentments to it: their anger, for instance, will yield to a gift; nay, a rich present, prudently placed, will extinguish that wrath, which was thought implacable.

15. *It is joy to the just to do judgment: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.*

a terrour to those that have violated them, by their wicked deeds: who look upon themselves as in danger to be undone thereby.

16. *The man that wandreth out of the way of understanding, shall remain in the congregation of the dead.*

conduct of his own foolish lusts and passions, shall after all his extravagancies be sent down to hell; and there confined to the company of the old Giants: who giving themselves over to debauched courses, were swept away with a deluge. (See II. 18. IX. 18.)

17. *He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oyl shall not be rich.*

seen, that voluptuous men destroy their own pleasures, by wasting their estates, and bringing themselves to extreme beggary: at the best, he can never thrive, who loves to feast, and to live delicately.

18. *The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous: and the transgressor for the upright.*

good and the bad, that righteous men are not onely strangely delivered from those dangers which others fall into; but preserved from mischief, by its seizing on the wicked: and men sincerely vertuous, escape in a common calamity; when they that prevaricate with God and with Religion, by that very means (which they thought was best for their safety) are overwhelmed in it.

15. The execution of justice is a joy to him, that hath observed the Laws; but

16. He that will not live by those wise Laws, which God hath prescribed him, but follows the con-

17. Nay, before he goes thither he may suffer very much; for it is too frequently

18. Nay, such is the distinction which Divine Providence makes between the

19. *It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.*

It is better to dwell in a desolate place upon earth; than to live in a palace with a contentious wife: whom nothing can please; but is uneasie and angry at every thing, and always gives provoking language.

20. *There is a treasure to be desired, and oyl in the dwelling of the wise: but a foolish man spendeth it up.*

There is a treasure to be desired, and oil in the dwelling of the wise: which it teaches him also to enjoy with great satisfaction, though but in a small habitation; but such is the folly of a wicked man, that he lavishly spends all those treasures; which he knows not how to get, nor how to live without.

21. *He that followeth after righteousness and mercy, findeth life, righteousness and honour.*

He that follows after righteousness and mercy, shall lead a most happy life: for, besides the satisfaction and pleasure he hath in doing good, he shall preserve himself from being injured; and oblige all to be kind to him; and be highly esteemed, honoured and praised every where.

22. *A wise man scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof.*

A wise man, are not able to resist a wise and pious Commander, that besieges them: but they are either taken by his cunning stratagems; or they yield themselves to his eminent goodness; unto which they trust more than to their fortifications.

19. It is more eligible (as was said before v. 9.) to dwell quietly, in the most

20. Wisdom furnishes a man not only with the necessities, but with all the conveniences and pleasures of life, that

21. He that makes it his business to be good; not contenting himself merely

22. The virtue of the mind is of greater force, and more prevalent, than strength of body; For a whole City of mighty

23. *Whoso*

23. *Whoſo keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his ſoul from troubles.*

his mouth, and taking care to offend neither God nor man by what he ſpeaks, preserves his mind from a great deal of trouble, and himſelf from dangerous diſtreſſes.

24. *Proud and haughty ſcorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.*

makes him inſatiable in his deſires, as he regards neither God nor man; ſo he cannot indure the leaſt oppoſition, nor doe any thing with moderation: but, being eaſily enraged, with inſolent fierceneſs and cruelty, proceeds againſt thoſe that croſs his deſigns. See Arg. [g].

25. *The deſire of the ſlothfull killeth him: for his hands reſuſe to labour.*

perpetual torment to him, becauſe he will not be at the pains to give them ſatisfaction: nay, they bring him ſometime to a miſerable end; becauſe his ſloth moves him to make proviſion for them by robbery, or other unlawfull ways, rather than by following ſome honeſt, but laborious calling.

26. *He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and ſpareth not.*

exceeding eager and reſtleſs, to his own and others great diſturbance: but he that is diligent and honeſt, is ſo far from deſiring, much leſs ſtealing, his neighbour's goods, that he freely gives away his own; and hath not the leſs thereby, but ſtill enough to ſpare.

27. *The ſacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?*

23. He that is wary and cautious in his talk, thinking ſeriously before he open

24. He that is puffed up with a great conceit of himſelf, whoſe ambition

25. A ſluggard hath deſires as well as other men; which muſt needs be a per-

26. Nor is there any meaſure in his deſires; but as they are endleſs, ſo they are

27. God is ſo far from being pleaſed merely with Sacrifices (XV. 8.) that when they are offered by impious

impious men, who never think of amending their lives, he detests them; though presented with never so specious a shew of piety: especially, when at that very time, they have some wicked design in their heads, which they think to sanctifie by their sacrifices.

28. *A false witness shall perish: but the man that heareth, speaketh constantly.*

28. He that for money, or love, or hatred, shall testify any thing of which he

hath no knowledge, shall soon lose his credit; and at last come to a miserable end (XIX. 9.) but he, that in obedience to God, testifies nothing but what he hath attentively heard or seen; as he never varies from what he deposes, so he shall alway be believed, and continue in good esteem as long as he lives.

29. *A wicked man hardeneth his face: but as for the upright, he directeth his way.*

29. All the endeavours of a man resolvedly wicked, is to grow so Impudent

that he may not blush at what he doth; nor be moved, in the least, by any man's admonitions or reproofs: but a man sincerely vertuous is so different from him, that he himself examines and censures his own actions if they be amiss; and makes it all his care so to live, that he may not be ashamed of what he doth.

30. *There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the LORD.*

30. It is folly to design any thing which is not approv'd by the Lord: for let

it be managed with all the skill that natural sagacity, long study and experience can furnish men withall; with the most prudent foresight also of all contingencies; and with mature and deliberate advice about the most effectual means, and with due application of them to the end; they all signifie nothing, when they oppose the counsels and decrees of Heaven.

31. *The horse is prepared against the day of battel: but safety is of the LORD.*

31. Nor is power and force, though never so great, more significant than counsel and

and advice: For after an army of Horses, and Chariots, and valiant Soldiers, are set in battle array, they can give no security of Victory, without the divine favour and help; from whom alone therefore both safety and prosperous success is to be expected. See Arg. [h].

CHAP. XXII.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *After an Admonition not to set too great a price upon Riches; (v. 1.) there follows another (v. 2.) unto rich men; not to set too great a value upon themselves: but with an instruction also to the poor, not to be discontented with their condition; the rich having as much need of them, as they have of the rich. Greg. Nazianzen, indeed (Orat. XVI. p. 263.) is of opinion that Solomon doth not say, that God hath made one man poor and another rich, ὡς δὲ πῶλον ἐὶ δρόδον ἢ τοιαύτη διαφοράς, for it is not apparent that such a distinction is from God: but his meaning is onely this, that πλάσσει Θεὸς ὁμοίως ἀμφοτέρους, καὶ ἐὶ τὰ ἕξωθεν ἀνίστα, they are both alike the workmanship of God, though in external regards they be unequal. Which ought to shame rich men into sympathy, and brotherly kindness towards them; that when they are apt to be lifted up because of those things wherein they are unequal, they may be taken down again and become more moderate, when they consider how in the greatest things they are both alike.*

But I have had a respect to the other thing also in my Paraphrase: because, if God did not intend, in the beginning, so great a disparity as we now see (which this is not a place to dispute) yet some disparity, it may be easily proved, he did design; the mean condition, that is (though not beggary) of some, in comparison with others.

Which

Which serves many wise ends of his Providence: nay, beggary may be very usefull, to give the greater occasion of liberality on the one hand, and of patience, humility, and honest diligence on the other. And to be commended for these vertues, is much better than to be rich, as he observes in the first verse. Where Melancthon, hath a large discourse to show that it is lawfull, nay necessary, to endeavour after a good fame: according to that saying, I have need of a good conscience, with respect to God, and of a good name for the sake of my neighbours. And he alledges some ancient sentences to the same purpose with this of Solomon; as that of Publius, Honestus rumor alterum patrimonium est: and that of Plautus, Honestam famam si servasso, sat ero dives.

[b] *There are more observations about riches, in v. 7, 8, 9. which seem to me to have a dependance one upon the other; and so I have considered them in the Paraphrase. And in the next verse but one (v. 11.) I have followed the judgment of Lud. de Dieu, who thinks Solomon observes two fruits of pureness of heart; one, that the word of such a man may be relied on; and the other, that the King (who loves not to be deceived) will be his Friend, upon that account. This seems nearest to the Hebrew; unless we will take it thus: Two things recommend a man to the affection of a Prince, his Integrity, and his Eloquence: which make him very capable to do his Prince service. And then the Paraphrase must run thus: He that loves sincerity above all things, and is able to deliver his mind in acceptable language, is fit to be Privy Counsellour to a King.*

[c] *And to this, I conceive, he hath some respect in the next verse; whereby Daath Knowledge, in the first part of it, we are to understand (the other part of the verse shows) men truly knowing, and who speak according to their knowledge.*

[d] In

[d] In the 13 verse, there is an admirable description of the disposition of foolish persons, who raise difficulties in their own fancies, where there are none; or, pretending them greater than they are, will not so much as attempt any thing, because it is possible they may meet with insuperable hindrances. Which some have, not wisely, applied, to cowardly Magistrates, who dare not punish great and powerfull offenders; but excuse themselves, saying, He is a mighty man, there is no dealing with him, &c. Whereas a worthy Magistrate (as an excellent Prelate of our own, Bishop Sanderfon, speaks) would meet with such a Lion to chuse; that he might make God's Ordinance to be revered, and clear the way for others, by tearing such a beast in pieces; and would no more fear to make a Worshipfull Thief, or a Right Worshipfull Murtherer (if such a one should come in his circuit) an example of Justice; than to twitch up a poor sheep-stealer.

But the Lord Bacon applies it, no less wittily, to the laziness of mankind, in the Advancement of Learning (L. 1. C. ult.) the knowledge of some things being so abstruse, that it is impossible to be compassed by humane industry. Whereas all those things are to be held possible and performable, which may be accomplished by some persons, though not by every one; and which may be done by the united labours of many, though not by any one apart; and which may be effected in a succession of Ages, though not in the same age; and in brief, which may be finished by the public care and charge, though not by the abilities and industry of particular persons. But there is no excuse for those, who will not set themselves to any enquiries; because some things cannot be known. which is perfectly the temper of the sluggard, Solomon here mentions; who because a Lion sometimes comes into the street, would not stir out of his doors. It was not ordinary, you must know, for Lions to come into Towns: no nor
to

to rove in the day-time (the night being their season, CIV. Psal. 20.) But sometimes by the divine vengeance they were stirred up to leave the desarts, and go into inhabited places (V. Jer. 6. 2 King. XVII. 25, 26.) and likewise (if we may believe the great Philosopher in his History of Animals) when they grow old, πρὸς τὰς πόλεις ἔρχονται μάλιστα, &c. they haunt Cities more than other places; because then they are not so able to prey upon beasts, and therefore lie in wait for men. The same is affirmed by Pliny, as Bochartus observes, L. III. C. 2. Part 1.

[c] In the Sixteenth verse I have followed our Translation, and expressed the sence to as much advantage as I could. But I think the Vulgar Latin which Luther and some others follow, comes nearer to the Hebrew, which runs thus: He that squeezes the poor to increase his own estate, gives to the rich (not to secure what he hath gotten but) onely to impoverish it: That is, He shall be squeezed by some mightier person than himself. And so the Paraphrase, in more words, should be this :

Such is the just Providence of Almighty God, that he, who, to enlarge his own estate or power, oppresseth the poor by violence or deceit, shall meet with the like extortion from others more powerfull than himself; and thereby be reduced to as poor a condition as those whom he oppressed.

*The End of the First Part of the Book
of PROVERBS.*

THE
SECOND PART
Of the BOOK of
PROVERBS.

Now from this verse, there is scarce any Interpreter but hath observed, another form of speech, much different from the former, begins, and continues unto the XXV. Chapter: And therefore it may not unfitly be called, The Second Part of the Book of Proverbs.

From the beginning of the Tenth Chapter to this place, the Instructions of Wisdom are delivered in short sentences, and Proverbs properly so called; which have seldom any connexion one with another, or not easily discerned: showing what is good or bad, true or false, &c. But now follow Exhortations, and Precepts, in the Imperative Mood of speech, and those comprehended in two or three, or more verses, before he finish what he intends. In which alteration, some think the weakness of the Reader is consulted: who being weary of the sententious way of instruction, may be refreshed and awakened unto new attention, by varying the form of writing. And thus the son of Syrach after his gnomas or sentences, adds an earnest exhortation to the study of Wisdom and Vertue, like this of Solomon, in the following Section, which I call his Second Part. Which may have respect both to that which went before; and to that which follows: as if he had said, let not all that hath been said be lost, or superficially regarded;

ed; but take a serious Review of the foregoing Counsels: and give ear also to what I have further to deliver, &c.

- [f] And to move the greater attention, he recommends them (v. 20) under the name of Schalischim, words fit for a Prince to speak, and the best men in the world to hear: which we truly therefore render excellent things. There is another notion of the word, I know, which I have not altogether neglected; but it always signifying in the Bible, either great Captains, and Commanders, and Nobles, or the best sort of Musical Instruments (as it doth in one place) I look upon this as the most proper interpretation of it.
- [g] And among those Principal Rules of life, he first commends this v. 22. not to be injurious to poor people: especially by oppressing them in a form of Justice. Which all know was administred by the Elders in the gate of their City; as may be seen in many more places, besides that, which I have noted in the Paraphrase XXI Deut. 19. XXII. 9. XXV. 7. IV. Ruth 1, 2, &c. Which being so common a notion, it is strange that the Greek Interpreters should here understand this verse of poor people begging at their doors: whom the Wise man admonishes them not to abuse. This seems to be their sense: but the word Tedakkee signifies more than enuons, dishonour or abuse, (which is the word whereby the LXX express it) for it denotes as much, as to crush, and that into bits, i. e. to undoe people utterly; which no body is inclined to doe, unto poor wretches begging at their doors: who are undone already.
- [h] Then follows a most necessary advice about the choice of a Friend, v. 24, 25. upon which the Lord Bacon hath passed this judicious remark; (Advanc. of Learning, B. VIII. Ch. II. Par. 26.) "By how much the more
 "devoutly the Laws of Friendship among good men are
 "to be observed; by so much the more it stands us
 "upon to use all caution, even at the very first, in
 "the

“ *the prudent Election of Friends.* And let the disposition and humours of our Friends be what they will, so far as concerns our selves onely, they are by all means to be born withall: but when they impose a necessity upon us, to behave our selves just as they would have us towards other men, it is a very hard, and unreasonable condition of Friendship. *Wherefore it highly concerns us, as Solomon here admonishes for the preserving of the peace and safety of our life, that we intermingle not our matters with men of a cholerick nature: and such as easily provoke, or undertake Quarrels, and Debates.* For such kind of Friends will perpetually engage us in contentions and factions: so that we shall be constrained either to break off Friendship, or to be wanting to our own personal safety.

[i] In the two next verses (v. 26, 27.) he seems to warn men against such Friendships, as will engage them to be bound for the debts of others. There are several Admonitions before, against being surety for a stranger, *VL 1. XI. 15.* and in one place (*XVII. 18.*) he seems to caution against rash engagements, though for a neighbour or friend: but especially, he here adds, when a man is conscious to himself that he hath no estate, and doth but deceive him to whom he stands bound for another man's debt: And so by pretending to be more able than he is, deprives himself of the benefit of that Law mentioned *XXII. Exod. 26, 27.* and repeated *XXIV. Deut. 6.*

[k] What is said in the 28 verse against the removing of the Boundaries whereby one man's possessions are distinguished from anothers; and that by ancient consent; is applied, by all sorts of Writers, as a caution against innovations. And it is a great mistake to imagine, that onely Popish Authours make that use of it: for the best of the Protestants, have thought fit to accommodate it to the same purpose. And among the rest

Melancthon

Melancthon hath very judiciously explained it, in this manner. " This Precept is not obscure, if it be cited " allegorically for not changing the Laws, which Antiquity by Grave Authority hath delivered; unless " there be an evident necessity. For this is often repeated among the precepts of political life, not rashly " to change the ancient Laws. And here he quotes " a long passage out of Demosthenes against Timocrates, concerning the people of Locri; who ordained that he who proposed a new Law to them, " should do it with an halter about his neck, &c. And " if there were such severity now, saith Melancthon, " we should not have so many new Dogmatists and " Lycurgus's, about Wax-candles, and Bells, and such-like things; of whose change, as there is no necessity " at all, so it would bring no utility. And wise men require us to pardon and indulge some small inconveniences to custom; lest by motion, as it is in sick bodies, the Commonwealth should suffer a greater evil. " It is necessary indeed here to add this caution when any " Doctrine is impious, and the Law establishes impious opinions and Idols, then we ought to prefer Rules " before them, and to obey God rather than man. " But when such amendment is necessary, the boundaries " and limits of our Fathers are not taken away but restored: because we only return to the Doctrine delivered by God to our first Father, according to that of " Tertullian, Primum quodque verissimum est. All " our care therefore herein is to enquire diligently, " what is the true Antiquity: for that is a great confirmation of our Faith, when we understand the true " state of the Church in all Ages, to follow the testimony of those who retain the Foundation.

[1] In the last verse, Solomon doth not merely commend Industry and Diligence, as some understand it (taking this to be the same with the Greek Proverb, *Τὸ ἄνθρωπος*) but something more; which the Hebrew word

Mahir

Mahir plainly imports, viz. speed, swiftneſs, readineſs, and cheerfullneſs, in the diſpatch of buſineſs. To which is required a quickneſs of apprehenſion in diſcerning the fitteſt means, and a dexterity in the application of them: ſo that the buſineſs is not onely done, but done ſpeedily, and without much noiſe and buſtle. On ſuch a perſon, if he can be found, Solomon here makes this remark, that he is likely to come to great preferment. “ For
“ there are no qualities (as is obſerved by the Lord Bacon B.VIII.Ch. II. Parab.XIX.) which Princes more
“ reſpect and require in the choice of a Miniſter, or
“ Servant, than celerity and alacrity in the diſpatch of
“ buſineſs: which is above all the reſt, as he ſhows by
“ this induction. Men of profound Wiſdom, are
“ many times ſuſpected by Kings as too prying; and a-
“ ble by the ſtrength of their wit (as with an Engine)
“ to turn and wind about their Maſters, inſenſibly,
“ whether they will or no. Then popular perſons are
“ hated, as thoſe that ſtand in the light of Kings, and
“ draw the eyes of the people too much unto themſelves.
“ Men of courage, are commonly taken for turbulent
“ ſpirits, and more daring than is meet. Honest men,
“ who are valuable for their integrity, are thought
“ too ſtiff; not ſo pliable as their Maſters deſire, to
“ their will and pleaſure in every thing. To conclude,
“ ſaith he, there is not any other good quality, which
“ preſents not ſome ſhadow, wherewith the mind of
“ Kings may be offended: onely quickneſs of diſpatch,
“ in the execution of commands, hath nothing in
“ it, that doth not pleaſe. The motions alſo of the
“ minds of Kings are ſwift, and not very patient of
“ delays. For they imagine they can doe any thing:
“ this onely being wanting, that it be done out of
“ hand. Upon which account, above all other quali-
“ ties, celerity is to them moſt acceptable.

1. **A** Good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.

them well (or any other vertue) much before them: and chuse much rather to be esteemed and beloved of good men, than to be possessed of abundance of silver and gold. See Arg. [a].

2. *The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all.*

ther, and have need one of another: and will agree well enough, and not clash one against another, if they both consider; that there is one Lord who is the Creator of both; and hath by his Providence ordered this inequality, for their mutual good. See Arg. [a].

3. *A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.*

and circumspect, foresees a calamity before it come; and withdraws himself from the danger, into a place of safety; but an incautious and credulous person is easily abused by crafty men, to overlook the mischief, which even they intend against him; and so he goes on securely in his accustomed track, till it overtake him.

4. *By humility, and the fear of the LORD, are riches and honour, and life.*

dition, arising from a Religious regard to the divine Majesty, is the way to be promoted, both to wealth and to honour; and to enjoy them both also, a long time, in joy and pleasure.

5. *Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward: he that doth*

1. **R**iches are not so great a good as men imagine; for a wise man will prefer the fame of using

2. The World doth not consist all of rich, nor all of poor; but they are mixed together

3. He whose long experience and observation of things hath made him cautious

4. A modest sense of a man's self, and humble submission to the meanest condition

5. The life of a man that winds and turns any way, to bring

keep his soul, shall be far from them. bring about his ends, is very scandalous to others; and will in-

tangle him at last in most grievous troubles: he therefore that hath a care of his soul, will have no society with such persons; and thereby avoid the danger of being undone by them.

6. *Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.* 6. Instruct a child, as soon as ever he is capable, and season his mind with the

principles of virtue, before he receive other impressions: and it is most likely they will grow up with him; so that when he is older, he will not forsake them, but retain them as long as he lives.

7. *The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.* 7. Riches draw dominion along with them over the meaner sort; nay, though

a man be not absolutely poor, yet if he be forced to borrow, he loses his liberty, and depends upon the will and pleasure of the lender.

8. *He that soweth iniquity, shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail.* 8. But let not such abuse their power, for no man can reap better than he sows; but

if he doe injury to others, it shall produce his own trouble: and the Authority which he employs vexatiously and spitefully shall fail him; and not be able to bear him out in his inhumanity.

9. *He that hath a bountifull eye, shall be blessed: for he giveth of his bread to the poor.* 9. On the other side, he that beholding the miserable condition of others, takes

compassion upon them, and friendly relieves them, shall be blessed by God, and commended by men: because he doth not put them off to be supplied by others, but imparts of his own goods to him, that cannot requite him again.

10. *Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out: yea, strife and reproach shall cease.*

tion, which he is wont to raise, will go out together with him: there will be no quarrels, no suits, no reproachfull words, wherewith contending persons are apt to bespatter one another, when such insolent, and turbulent men are excluded.

11. *He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips, the king shall be his friend.*

11. He whose heart is so free from guile, that he places his pleasure in the integrity of his mind, and the purity of his conscience, will never glose, nor flatter, nor study to put false colours upon things; but speak ingeniously, according to the sincere sense of his Soul: upon both which accounts a wise Prince will value him; and advise with him as a Friend. See Arg. [b].

12. *The eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge, and he overthroweth the words of the transgressor.*

12. There is a special Providence of God, which watches over honest men (who speak as they think) and which prospers the advice they give, and the affairs they manage: but He subverts such as are treacherous and perfidious; and blasts all their counsels and designs. See Arg. [c].

13. *The slothfull man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.*

13. A slothfull man never wants pretences to excuse himself from labour; for he can feign to himself imaginary difficulties, and make a dreadful representation of them: affrighting himself with dangers where there are none; or which happen very rarely. See Arg. [d].

14. *The mouth of strange women is a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the LORD, shall fall therein.*

14. When thou art enticed by the beauty and blandishments of those lewd women, from whom thou oughtest to estrange thy self as far, as they are estranged from God (see II. 16.) remember that they allure

allure thee into such a gulph of utter destruction; that to fall into their familiarity, is a mark of the highest displeasure of Almighty God against thee, for some other crimes.

15. *Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child: but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.*

15. False opinions and bad inclinations stick so close sometime to the mind and

will of a child, and are so twisted with them; that no admonitions, no reproofs, nor the wisest discourses; but only prudent and seasonable chastisement, and that not without some severity, will remove such obstinate folly.

16. *He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.*

16. There are some men have such a mixture of ill qualities; that at the same time they will take from

the poor to enrich themselves, though it be by violence or fraud; and give to the rich and powerfull to wink at their oppressions: But all in vain, for such practices shall certainly bring them to beggary. *See Arg. [e].*

*The End of the First Part of the Book
of PROVERBS.*

THE SECOND PART Of the BOOK of PROVERBS.

17. *Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge.*

17. And now let me exhort thee again (IV. 26. V. 1.) who-soever thou art, that readest

readest these things, to attend diligently; and consider seriously all the counsels and precepts which wise and good men have delivered: and in particular, let me prevail for an affectionate application of thy mind, to the knowledge which I impart unto thee.

18. *For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withall be fitted in thy lips.*

them, and thoroughly digest them, and faithfully persevere them in mind: that thou art able withal to produce any of them, as there is occasion, and aptly communicate them for other mens Instruction.

19. *That thy trust may be in the LORD, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee.*

and to be well assured of his gracious Providence over thee; which is the very end, for which I now declare these things to thee: that if thou hast been negligent before, yet now at length, thou, even thou mayst know the way to happiness; and shew it unto others.

20. *Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge:*

ways than one for thy information; and have set down most excellent Rules, and those well considered with great exactness and care, for thy conduct both in publick, and in a private state of life. See Arg. [f].

21. *That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth, that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?*

thee, but be able also to give sound advice to those that send to consult thee: and be fit to manage the most difficult affairs, to the satisfaction of them that employ thee in an Embassy.

18. For it will give thee most high satisfaction, if thou dost so heartily entertain

19. For what greater satisfaction can there be, than to have a good hope in God,

20. Think of it seriously, and deny if thou canst, that I have taken more

21. That thou mightest, not onely have a certain, firm, and solid knowledge, of all those truths that are necessary for

22. *Rob not the poor because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate.*

22. And besides those Instructions already given, remember these that follow.

Never abuse thy power to the spoiling of him, that is in a mean condition, because he is unable to resist thee: but especially do not undoe him there, where he hopes for relief, by denying him justice; much less by false accusations, when he comes into the publick courts of judgment (2 Sam. XV. 2.) See Arg. [g].

23. *For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.*

23. For all causes shall be heard over again, by a higher Judge; even the Lord

himself, who will do them right: and force their spoilers to pay dearly for the wrong they have done them; for which nothing less than their life shall make satisfaction.

24. *Make no friendship with an angry man: and with a furious man thou shalt not go:*

24. And as there is nothing more necessary than a Friend, so a principal point of

Wisdom consists in the choice of him; concerning which, observe this Rule among others: not to enter into any familiarity with a man prone to anger; and the more furious he is, be so much the more cautious, of being drawn along with him, into any company. See Arg. [h].

25. *Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.*

25. For it will be a very hard matter to preserve thy self,

in good temper, when he is out of humour; but thy very kindness to him, will make thee feel the same commotion: nay, bring thy very life into great danger, by being engaged in all his quarrels.

26. *Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts.*

26. And do not keep company with those, who are forward to pass their

word, and give security for the payment of other mens debts: lest they draw thee into such dangerous engagements

(VI. 1. XI. 15.) especially when thou hast no estate to answer the debt for which thou art bound. See Arg. [i].

27. *If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?* 27. For it will highly incense the Creditor when he falls upon thee, to find thou art not so able a man, as thou madest a show of to him: and so provoke him to pull away the very bed from under thee, when thou art in it; and leave thee shamefully and wretchedly on the ground: For why should any man have so little care of his own good, as thus to expose himself to such miserable straits, for the sake of another.

28. *Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.* 28. Be content with thy own estate, and do not seek to enlarge it by invading other mens possessions: especially those to which they have an unquestionable right, having enjoyed them by long prescription, and by the consent of thy forefathers, whose constitutions ought to be had in great veneration. See Arg. [k].

29. *Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men.* 29. Mark a man that is not rash, but yet quick and dextrous in the dispatch of any business he is charged withall: and thou mayst foretell that he shall not long continue obscure, in some private and mean family; but be taken notice of, and preferred to the service of his Prince, in some publick Ministry.

C H A P. XXIII.

A R G U M E N T.

[a] *As the foregoing Chapter concludes with an observation, concerning the quality of a person, who is most likely to come to preferment; so this begins with a caution to him, when he is promoted to it. For the first verse is*

(as

(as Melancthon calls it) *Aulica Admonitio*, an *Admonition to a Courtier*; remembring him, that there is danger, even in the favour, especially in the familiarity of Princes and great men. Whose kindness must be used, with much modesty and circumspection: especially if they be so extraordinary kind, as to admit an inferiour to eat with them: when if a man use not great moderation, he loses the guard he ought to have upon himself. For his head growing hot, his tongue may run, as we say, before his wit; his behaviour may be indecent, or too negligent, &c. and therefore Solomon advises such a person to be very considerate at that time, above all others; and with earnest attention to mind both who and what is before him: (for the Hebrew words may referr to both, as I have explained it in the Paraphrase) there being great danger of his ruin, if he give any offence, at such a time; when the passions of the Prince or Ruler, are apt to be as disordered, as his own. And therefore had need be watched, that he may know how to appease them presently; and so govern himself, as to receive no prejudice thereby.

[b] But especially he must be sure to have a command over his tongue (which Melancthon takes to be the meaning of putting a knife to his throat, v. 2.) that it take not too much liberty, and that he speak nothing rashly: which may undoe him, as it did Clitus: whom Alexander slew at a Feast, for contradicting him too freely. He cites many Admonitions out of the Poets concerning this danger; concluding with that counsel which Æsop gave Solon, when he was going to Cræsus; speak to a King, ἢ ὥς ἥκιστα, ἢ ὥς ἡδιστα, either as little, or as sweet, as is possible.

But this is too narrow a sence of that phrase, put a knife to thy throat; though it be a part of it. For it expresses the exceeding great caution, a man should use at a Feast lest he exceed his bounds in eating and drinking: wherein he should be as carefull, as he is of cutting

cutting his throat; which many have in effect done by intemperance: whereby some have utterly destroyed their healths at last; and others fallen into such a liberty of speech, as hath on a sudden cost them their lives. Be as afraid therefore, saith the Wiseman, of running into excess (of which thou art in great danger at a great Table, if thou hast a great stomach) as if the knife wherewith thou cuttest thy meat, would certainly cut thy throat, if thou eatest too much. In short, he advises a man to afright himself from Intemperance, where is a great temptation to it.

There are those indeed that take the first particle *ve*, in the beginning of the verse, to signify as much as otherwise; and the meaning to be, if thou dost not curb thy appetite, but let loose its reins to eat and drink, as much as it desireth, it will expose thee to as certain danger, as if a knife were at thy throat: which though it be not so easie a construction, I have not altogether neglected.

[c] After this follows an Admonition against Covetousness, v. 4. where he neither forbids all labour, nor a provident care (which in other places he commends) but onely represents how vain it is, to be over-sollicitous; and to leave no thoughts, nor strength for any thing else: for so the first word is, do not weary thy self to be rich. And in the next part of the Sentence, he onely bids us desist from our own understanding; meaning thereby, either we should not wholly trust to that, though in the use of honest means; or that we should not follow our own inventions, contrary to the divine direction. Some would have the meaning of the whole to be this; do not prefer the getting of riches, before the getting of wisdom: taking the verse as if it ran thus, labour not for riches so as to cease from the prosecution of wisdom: let not thy worldly cares hinder better things, and then there is no danger: which is an excellent sense, if the words would bear it.

[d] The

[d] *The reason which Solomon adds v. 5. hath little or no difficulty in it ; which is from the uncertainty, either of getting or of keeping Riches. Whose inconstancy he sets forth by the flight of an Eagle : which of all other birds is observed to fly swiftest, and highest into heaven (as Solomon here speaks) or into the clouds (as other Authors) that is, quite out of sight. Whence it is that God saying, he carried the Israelites out of Egypt upon Eagles wings, XIX Exod. 4. R. Solomon (upon XII. Exod. 37.) took a conceit that they went an hundred and twenty miles in one hour ; for so far it was from Ramases to Succoth. which though it be but an idle fanzie, yet there was this foundation for it ; that the Scripture expresses the swiftest motion by that of Eagles. So Saul and Jonathan, who were strong and excellent Racers, pursuing their Enemies with great speed, are said to have been swifter than Eagles, 2 Sam. I. 23. And such were they who pursued Zedekiah and the people of Judah, when they fled out of Jerusalem in hope to make an escape, IV. Lam. 19. I. Habakkk. 8. compared with 2 King. XXV. 4, 5. And thus other Nations represent it, as Bochartus observes out of Cicero, who tells us out of Chrysippus ; that when a Racer dreamt he was turned into an Eagle, an Interpreter told him ; Vicisti, ista enim ave vocat nulla velocius.*

[e] *Next to Covetousness he condemns Envy, as Melancthon and others understand, v. 6, &c. or rather such covetousness, as makes men sordid : whence arises indeed that part of envy, which disposes a man to grutch every thing to his neighbour, though he would be thought liberal : which I pass by onely with this note, of that good man ; that a singular diligence ought to be used, in observing and finding out, the dispositions and inclinations of others ; that we may know whom to avoid, and whom to consort withall. And (according as he understands the beginning of the next verse, v. 7.) there is none worse than the man now mentioned, who hath a Spectre*

or Satyr in his Soul; so he renders it, mistaking Schaár for Saár: which are widely different. And this word Schaár, being used onely here in this place, hath raised a great deal of difficulty, whence to derive it: which I shall not trouble the Reader withall; the sence being well enough expressed in our Translation, and in short is this, He is not as he seems: His thoughts differ much from his words; and therefore do not believe what he saith, but mark the discovery he makes of his inward thoughts. Which are so sordid, that he is detestable, as some render the phrase, or stinkingly base.

[f] Of envy at the prosperous estate of wicked men, which makes others wish themselves in their condition, though it be by imitating their wickedness, he speaks afterwards, v. 17. From whence to the XXV. Chapter, most of the precepts are admonitions, proper for Parents to give their Children; that they may know what to eschew: particularly Drunkenness and Whoredom (of which he speaks in this Chapter) and such company, as may intice them to be so lewdly wicked. And in order hereunto to implant in their minds a due esteem of Wisdom, as infinitely to be preferred before all earthly treasures. This he inserts in the middle, between the cautions against Drunkenness and Whoredom [g] v. 23. upon which the Lord Bacon hath passed this remark, that the wise man judged it reasonable, that Riches should be employed to get Learning, and not Learning be applied to gather up Riches.

[h] "S. Chrysostom's observation concerning an Harlot
 " (Hom. XIV. ad pop. Antioch.) most excellently ex-
 " plains v. 27, 28. that πορνὴ φιλεῖν ἐκ ὁμιλίας, ἀλλ'
 " ὁμιλεῖ μένον, a Whore understands nothing of
 " love or friendship but onely of the art of inveigling.
 " Her heart is never sensible of true affection; but is
 " made up of wiles to deceive and entrap men unto
 " their undoing. And if the danger do not appear
 " she

"*she is the more to be avoided* ὅτι περισσὰ ἔχει ὄλεθρον,
 " &c. because she covers the destruction, and hides
 " the death; and takes care it shall not presently come
 " into the sight of him, whom she insnares into it.

- [i] In the conclusion of the Chapter he reassumes his discourse about drunkenness; and represents at large the dismal effects of it, in so lively a manner, as may well deter any man that reads it seriously, from being too busie with Wine. Which he saith, in conclusion, bites like a Serpent, and stings like a Basilisk: (So Bochartus hath proved we ought to translate the word Tziphoni, which we render Adder) whence it was, that Tatianus, the Encratites and Manichees, called Wine, the gall of the Dragon, and the venom of the old Serpent: and would not taste a drop of it, no not in the holy Communion. Not considering, what lies open and obvious to every bodies eyes, that there is no hurt in the thing it self (which is a singular divine benefit) but in our excess. Whereby innumerable diseases are bred in the body, the reason for the present suffocated, and the most absurd affections stirred up: which change men for the time into Beasts. Some into Lions as Bochartus glosses (L. III. C. X. P. 2.) witness Alexander, who killed his dearest Friend in his cups, and Herod, who after a Feast condemned the great Servant of God John Baptist (whom he himself highly revered) to be beheaded: others into Dogs, as Nabal, who most rudely and churlishly barked at David, to whom he had great obligations, when he was in drink: Others into Hogs, wallowing in filthy pleasures; as Lot who defiled himself with incest, when he was not himself: nay, it throws men down below the beasts, who drink no more than needs, and never excite their thirst by art, but onely follow the direction of Nature. All which, if any man consider, he will easily allow of what Solomon says, that it bites like a Serpent, &c. that is, doth more mischief than can be repaired. For
 the

the wound which the Basilisk gives, is said by Avicenna to be incurable; and the Writers of his Nation say, it doth hurt even by its looks and by its hissing, as that Author before named relates Cap. IX. And so Solomon immediately represents the effects of drunkenness to be such, that they make a man senseless, and perfectly stupid; and consequently incorrigible, though he suffer never so sadly by it, v. 34, 35. As if this poison, made a mortification in the whole man; for which there is no remedy.

1. **W**hen thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee.

1. **W**hen a Prince or a very great person, doth thee the honour to admit thee to his table; be not transported with such vain joy, as to remit the seriousness of thy mind: but remember thou art in danger, if thou hast not thy wits about thee to direct thy behaviour; lest thou touch any thing, which perhaps was reserved onely for the Prince's own eating, or demean thy self undecently towards him, or towards any of the Guests, or Waiters at the Table. See Arg [a].

2. And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite.

2. Especially lest thou speak too freely, which may hazard thy undoing; for the prevention of which keep thy mind as sharp set as thine appetite; and affright thy self from intemperance in language, as well as in eating: of which there is the greater danger, if thou hast a greedy desire of meat and drink. See Arg. [b].

3. Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitfull meat.

3. Most especially when exquisite delicacies are set before thee; which are so tempting, that it is a piece of wisdom not to be too forward to accept of such invitations; or being there to content thy self with the plainest dish: for it was not kindness, but design perhaps which called thee thither; or thou mayst be easily inticed by such dainties, to over-eat thy self.

4. *Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.*

4. Do not trouble thy self with restless and tirefome labours

to get a great estate; be not too thoughtfull, nor let thy cares be endless, about such matters; much less use any ill contrivances, which they may suggest to thee: no, nor depend so much upon thy own prudent management for the success of thy honest undertakings, as upon God's blessing. *See Arg. [c].*

5. *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings, they flee away as an eagle towards heaven.*

5. Consider, for the cure of this, how ridiculous it is, that thou shouldst let thy mind be so intent upon Riches, and pursue them with such haste and earnestness; which perhaps thou canst never catch; or if thou dost may be gone as fast as they came; and by all thy care and pains never be recovered. *See Arg. [d].*

6. *Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats.*

6. Receive no obligations from a fordid man: but though he invite thee to a

Feast (which he may make perhaps sometime for ostentation sake) let not the good cheer tempt thee, to accept his invitation. *See Arg. [e].*

7. *For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee, but his heart is not with thee.*

7. For even then, when he would be thought most free and generous, he is not able to dissemble

the baseness of his mind: which expresses it self in his very looks; whereby he shews that when he prays thee to feed heartily, he had rather thou wouldst let it alone, and thinks thou eatest and drinkest a great deal too much.

8. *The morsel which thou hast eaten, shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.*

8. Which will make thee so nauseate all his dainties, as to be ready to bring up again every bit thou hast eaten: and to repent of the commen-

again every bit thou hast eaten: and to repent of the commen-

commendations thou hast bestowed on his entertainment; or the thanks thou hast returned to him for it; or the wholesome discourse, thou hast interspersed at the Table: for it is all perfectly lost upon him.

9. *Speak not in the ears of a fool; for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.* 9. And indeed it is good advice, not to speak of any serious thing to such stupid

fools: for be thy discourse never so ingenious, prudent, or instructive, they will not onely reap no profit by it; but despise and perhaps laugh at it.

10. *Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless.* 10. What was said before (XXII. 28.) of not removing the ancient boundaries, under-

stand with a peculiar respect to Fatherless Children: whose possessions be not tempted to invade, because they are in their Infancy, and do not understand the wrong that is done them; or are utterly unable to defend or to right themselves.

11. *For their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.* 11. For, if their guardians and friends be careless of their concerns, or afraid

to oppose thy proceedings, they have a Protector who neither wants power nor courage to recover their right: and will undoubtedly assert it, and condemn thee to make them ample satisfaction, XXII. 23.

12. *Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.* 12. And do not think these to be slight admonitions, which need not much

to be regarded: but apply thy mind with sincere affection to such instructions, and listen diligently to those persons whose discourses tend to make thee understand thy duty.

13. *Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou bearest him with the rod, he shall not die.* 13. Unto which Children sometimes will not attend, and therefore remember

what

what hath been often said (XIII. 24. XIX. 18. XXII. 15.) and do not forbear to give correction to a Child, that is so ill disposed: let not foolish pity make thee spare him; for it will doe him no hurt if he be soundly beaten; but rather be a means to save him from forer punishment, even from death it self.

14. *Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.* 14. Do not turn over this business to another, but doe it thy self; which may

save the publick Officers the labour: nay, by making his body smart for his faults, both body and soul may be delivered from utter destruction.

15. *My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine.* 15. But mix the kindest exhortations and intreaties with this discipline, saying;

My dear Child, if thou hast any love for me, who was the Instrument of bringing thee into the world, be serious, and heartily in love with wisdom and goodness: which will give me, me I say (not to mention now thy own happiness) a joy incomparably greater than all other.

16. *Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things.* 16. A joy that may be better felt than expressed; diffusing it

self all over me; and making my mind triumph, when I hear no ill words come out of thy mouth; but onely discourses of the right way to be happy.

17. *Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long.* 17. In which that thou mayst always tread, be not offended at the prosperity of

the wicked; much less vex and fret thy self into an imitation of them: but maintain perpetually an awfull sense of God in thy mind; which is the best preservative against envy and all other sins, if thou perseverest constantly in it. See Arg. [f].

18. *For surely there is an end, and thine expectation shall not be cut off.* 18. Which there is great reason thou shouldst; for be assured

ured, though thou art afflicted for the present, the time will come when thou shalt not onely be delivered, but rewarded for thy patience: expect it confidently, if the fear of the Lord make thee persist in faithfull obedience to him: for it shall not be in the power of man to disappoint thee of thy hope; but thou shalt certainly flourish, when those wicked men shall hang down their heads and perish.

19. *Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way.*

19. And more particularly, my dear Child, be advised by me to study this piece

of wisdom; and to follow closely and heartily this direction which I commend to thee.

20. *Be not amongst wine-bibbers; amongst riotous eaters of flesh.*

20. I know how greedy youth is of pleasure; and in what danger to be

corrupted by it: therefore avoid the society of drunkards and gluttons; and take heed of all excess in eating and drinking.

21. *For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.*

21. For besides that it is an enemy to wisdom, it brings men to poverty; which is the com-

mon effect of revelling, feasting and riotous living: for that is wont to be attended also with laziness, carelessness and neglect of all business; which necessarily reduces men to extreme beggary.

22. *Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.*

22. Be obedient to this counsel, which is given thee by thy Father, who loves

thee, and hath had longer experience of the world than thou, and by bringing thee into it hath power to command thee: and do not slight (as the manner is) what thy Mother saith, because she is a woman, much less because she is grown old; which ought to make her advice the more regarded by thee.

23. *Buy*

23. *Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.*

good and bad; and do not think there is any thing of equal price unto it: and therefore neglect not the study of it, though it were to get never so much money, or the highest honours; but prefer wisdom and virtue, and the means that instruct thee how to attain it, and to make thee able to doe good to others, infinitely before them all. See Arg. [g].

24. *The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoyce: and he that begetteth a wise child, shall have joy of him.*

is the onely wisdom, so gives both the highest pleasure and satisfaction.

25. *Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoyce.*

thy well-doing fill the heart of her that bare thee with joy and triumph: who for all the pains and care she hath had in thy birth and about thy education, desires no other requital but onely this.

26. *My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.*

apply thy mind affectionately to this following instruction: and let thy thoughts be very intent and fixt upon it; that thou mayest preserve thy self in the practice of those virtues to which I have directed thee.

27. *For an whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit.*

for (as I have told thee before, XXII. 14.) thou art utterly undone, if thou fallest in league with a whore; who will never be

23. Spare no cost nor pains to acquire the knowledge of what is true and false,

24. For there is no greater joy a Parent can have, than to see his Son take vertuous courses: which as it

25. Let not thy Father and Mother then, want this singular pleasure; but by

26. And more especially, my dear Child, let me prevail with thee also to ap-

27. Estrange thy self from harlots, as much as they are estranged from God;

satisfied with all the money thou canst give her: and yet, such are her arts, notwithstanding all the streights and hardships thou shalt suffer by her, it will be a hard matter, when thou art once engaged, to get quit of her.

28. *She also lieth in wait as for a prey, and increaseth the transgressours among men.*

is no better than a high-way robber; who will watch all opportunities to make a prey of thee: and is of no other use in the world, which already is too bad, but to make it worse; by increasing the number of leud, disloyal and faithless men. See Arg. [b].

29. *Who hath wo? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?*

effects of which are so many, that it is a hard matter to enumerate them: For if thou considerest, who they are that run themselves into all manner of mischiefs, they are that are out of danger, but are engaged, for instance, in quarrels, disturbing the neighbourhood, by their noise and tumult, and fighting; and are wounded, not for the safety of their Country, but for frivolous causes; look deformedly, and spoil their very countenances.

30. *They that tarry long at the wine, they that go to seek mixt wine.*

that they neither willingly stir from it; nor content themselves with the ordinary sort: but make a diligent search for the richest and most generous liquors.

31. *Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth it self aright.*

thou seest how bright it looks, and how it sparkles in

28. She is not what she appears; but, whatsoever love she may pretend to thee,

29. And if thou intendest to avoid such women, then (as I said before v. 20.) avoid intemperance; the lamentable effects

30. Thou wilt find they are such as are so in love with wine,

31. Therefore do not believe thy senses merely, but consider the power and effects of wine: and when

in the glass; when it tastes most gratefully, and goes down smoothly; let it not entice thee to excess.

32. *At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.* 32. But remember, that the pleasure will be attended at

last with intolerable pains; when it works like so much poison in thy veins; and casts thee into diseases as hard to cure, as the biting of a Serpent, or the stinging of a Basilisk. See Arg. [i].

33. *Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.* 33. Thy thoughts will not onely grow confused, and all things appear to thee

otherways than they are; but lustfull, nay adulterous desires will be stirred up, which thou canst not rule: and thy mouth, being without a bridle, will break forth into unseemly, nay filthy, scurrillous, or perhaps blasphemous language; without respect to God or man.

34. *Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.* 34. And, which is worst of all, thou wilt grow so perfectly senseless, that thy most important busi-

ness will not onely lie neglected; but thou wilt sottishly run thy self into the extremest hazards, without any apprehension of danger: being no more able to direct thy course, than a Pilot who snorts when a Ship is tossed in the midst of the Sea; or to take notice of the peril thou art in, than he that falls asleep on the top of the Mast, where he was set to keep the watch.

35. *They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.* 35. And to compleat thy misery, shouldst thou be not onely, mockt and abused, but beaten also, thou thy self wilt confess afterward,

that it made no impression on thee: nay, shouldst thou be most lamentably battered and bruised, thou wilt neither know who did it, nor at all regard it; but, as if no harm

had befall'n thee, no sooner open thy eyes, but stupidly seek an occasion to be drunk, and beaten again.

CHAP. XXIV.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *The proneness of good men, especially while they are weak, and onely in the beginnings of Goodness, to be dejected at the prosperity of the ungodly, and so to be tempted to imitate them, is the reason, that the admonition we meet withall in the first verse is so often repeated. Which we find before III. 31. XXIII. 17. and comes again v. 18. of this Chapter.*

[b] *And, in like manner, for the encouragement of well-disposed persons, to depend on God's blessing, in the exercise of a vertuous prudence; for the getting, increasing, and preserving of an estate (v. 3, 4, 5.) he repeats another observation (v. 6, 7.) of the advantage which Wisdom hath over mere strength: which we had several times before, XI. 14. XV. 22. XX. 18.*

[c] *And then having shōwn that it is not Wisdom to invent new ways of doing hurt (v. 8, 9.) he advises to diligence in the asquiring of true Wisdom, while we are in a good condition: For else we shall not be able to support our selves when adversity comes. So some understand v. 10. which we translate otherways, and so do most Interpreters: and therefore I have expressed, the sence of our translation first; and onely annexed the other to it. There is a third, which I have taken no notice of in my Paraphrase, because it doth not seem to me to be genuine; which is this, If adversity deject thee, and break thy spirit; thou wilt be so much the more unable to get out of it. But it is an excellent observation, and therefore I thought good here to mention it: though the simplest sence seems to be that which we follow,*

follow, and in brief is this; Thou art not a man of courage, if thou canst not bear adversity with an equal mind.

[d] *And there is a courage to be exercised in our charitable succouring of others, as well as in our own distresses; which he commends in the following words, v. 11; 12. Where he presses with a great deal of warmth (as will appear to those that understand the Hebrew language, and read the last words with an interrogation) the necessity of giving our assistance for the rescuing of innocent persons (when their lives are in danger) either by counselling them, or petitioning others on their behalf, or purchasing their release with money, or using our authority, or power (if we have any and can do it lawfully) for their deliverance. For this chiefly belongs to Magistrates, and those that are in publick Office; who ought not to be over-awed by great men, from undertaking the protection and relief of those who are unjustly oppressed. This I think Melancthon hath expressed, as well, or better than any I have met withall, in this manner: " God commands both the Magistrate and private men, not to murder the innocent, and likewise not to assist unjust cruelty. But quite contrary the Magistrate ought to be the Guardian of innocent mens lives; and private persons in their places ought to oppose, without sedition, unjust severity, as much as they are able. There are many examples of this in the Scripture. Jonathan opposed his Father, and helpt to preserve David; not onely by the good testimony he gave of him, but by other good offices. Obadiah fed the Prophets, whom Jezabel designed to have killed. The Eunuch pulled up Jeremiah out of the dungeon; and the Egyptian Midwives saved the Israelites children, as Rahab afterward did the spies. In the time of Dioclesian, a noble person in the city of Nicomedia in Bithynia, publickly tore down the Edict of the Emperour, for putting Chri-*

“ *stians to death; that he might show he detested that*
 “ *unjust cruelty. Examples to the contrary, are such as*
 “ *that of Doeg, who in compliance with Saul's fury*
 “ *slew the innocent Priests: and many now, either open-*
 “ *ly or by their silence confirm the unjust severity,*
 “ *which is exercised against our Churches. Let such*
 “ *think of these words of Solomon, If thou forbear*
 “ *to deliver them, &c.*

[e] *Who shows with what pleasure such Instructions should be received, and how profitable, nay necessary, they are, by the example of Honey (v. 13, 14.) which was not onely reckoned the sweetest thing in those Countries (as appears by many places of Scripture) but one of those, which was most necessary, for humane life; as appears by the words of the Son of Sirach XXXIX. 41. For it was usefull for food, for drink, for medicine, for preserving of dead bodies; and was so natural to them, that it seems to have been the food of Infants, VII. Isa. 15. Whence the ancient Christians, were wont to give a little milk and honey to those who were baptized; as persons newly regenerate and born again: because Honey as well as Milk, was the nutriment of little children in those days and countries. How refreshing it was, appears by the story of Jonathan, 1 Sam. XIV. 17. and in what common use, by the example of our Saviour after his Resurrection, XXIV. Luk. 41, 42. Which may all be applied to Wisdom; from whence the mind derives the greatest satisfaction: and therefore ought to be, as it were, our daily diet (without which we cannot subsist) from the beginning of our days, unto the end of them.*

[f] *For many gracious promises are made to it, which must not be so understood, he shows, as if no evil thing should befall good men: but as Wisdom teaches them to be content with a little (which seems to be denoted by the word we translate habitation, v. 15.) so when they meet with any affliction, it instructs them not to despair of better*

better days. So those words are to be understood v. 16. Which are commonly not onely in Sermons, but in Books also applied to falling into sin: And that men may the more securely indulge themselves in their sins, and yet think themselves good men, they have very cunningly added something to them. For they are commonly cited thus, A just man falleth seven times a day. Which last words [a day, or in a day] are not in any translation of the Bible (much less in the Original) but onely some corrupt Editions of the Vulgar Latin: which against the plain scope of the Context, and the meaning of the words, seems to understand this place of falling into sin. When the word fall never signifies so; but always trouble and calamity: as abundance of learned men have long ago observed; particularly Tarnovius; and since him, Amama and Grotius. Nor needs there any other proof of it, than those places (which are many) wherein falling and rising again being opposed; both of them have respect to calamities: and the former signifies, being plunged into them. and the other, getting out of them. And so, in the Latin tongue adversities, are called casus, falls, as every body knows.

And therefore we must make use of other places, for the confuting the fanisie of perfection in this life; and for the comfort of those who are cast down by their lapses into in-to sin: And take heed of reading the holy Scriptures so carelessly, as to turn our Medicine into poyson: which is the fault of those, who from such mistakes, give way to their evil affections; and let them carry them into sin.

[g] *Against this there follows a severe caution, in the Wise man, who would not have us so much as indulge our selves in that pleasure, we are apt to take, in seeing our Enemies fall into such troubles, as they have given us v. 17. And to this he annexes another which cannot be too often repeated (v. 19.) against fretting at the prosperity of those who do ill: which he often prohibits;*
but

but doth it now in the words of his Father David, XXXVII. Psal. I. whose authority was justly beld very great in that Church: and who had made many observations, from his own experience, of the shortness of their felicity; and the sudden changes with which they were often surprised and astonished.

[h] An instance he gives of this in the next precept (v. 21, 22.) which, saith Melancthon (so carefull were the Reformers to prevent all Sedition and Rebellion) is to be reckoned among the principal sentences, that are to be observed in this Book: commanding obedience, and directing the order of it. "For first he commands us to obey God; and then the King: whose office it is to see the Laws of God observed by his Subjects; and to make such Laws as are not repugnant to God's Laws; and to punish the contumacious; and to pronounce all sentences according to the Laws, &c. And in dubious cases, their decrees ought to prevail; not onely because there is a probable reason on their side, but because of the Authority given from above unto Magistrates: whom God would have us in civil affairs, though dubious before, to obey. And because God gives us sometimes more mild and gentle, sometimes less kind, He would have us also to bear onera duriora, if they be tolerable, and obedience be not a sin. For he threatens here a severe vengeance to those that are seditious: so he translates the word Schonim; which the Chaldee translates fools (changelings in our language) for they are no better, who invert and change this order) as some understand the word) either by advancing the will of the Prince above all Law, without any regard to what God himself hath enacted; or by pretending Religion and the fear of the Lord, for rebellion against the King, who ordains nothing against God's Law.

[i] But there is no necessity of glossing upon that word (which we render given to change) for though it be diversly

versly translated, the sence is still the same. And some of the varieties that are of opinions, about the sence of the latter part of the 22 verse, I have expressed in the Paraphrase, and madethem agree well enough. Laud. de Dieu is alone by himself (as far as I can find) who would have that word we render both of them, to signifie their years: and the meaning to be; who knows how soon their life may be at a miserable end?

Among the following sentences, which are rules also of Wisdom, there is no difficulty; but a little in v. 26. and 28. Where I have endeavoured to comprehend several expositions; and connext them together in my Paraphrase: but think not fit to enlarge this Preface any further, by giving a particular account of them.

1. **B**E not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them.

who are bent upon nothing but wickedness; much less move thee to think them happy, and to wish thy self among them: but avoid their company, and much more their course of life. See Arg. [a].

2. *For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.*

thoughts are always contriving how to ruine those that stand in the way of their wicked designs: and their tongues are employed in lyes, calumnies, false accusations, and all manner of forgeries; not onely to give trouble and vexation unto their neighbours, but to undoe them.

3. *Through wisdom is an house builded, and by understanding it is established:*

means, as I have recommended in this Book: and there need no other arts but vertue and prudent management, to settle and continue it.

1. **L**ET it not vex thee into impatience and indignation, to see men thrive

2. For who would grow rich and great by the misery of others? and such mens

3. An estate may be gotten, and a family raised by such wise and pious

4. *And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.*

so it is best able to furnish every room in the house; not only with all things necessary, but with what may serve for ornament and for the pleasure of life.

5. *A wise man is strong, yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength.*

strength, for a man's defence against unjust invaders of his possessions: or if he have outward strength and power, his skill and dexterity will add such force unto it, as will make it more effectual.

6. *For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety.*

armies; as upon exact conduct, good discipline and subtle contrivance: and the safety of a Nation doth not lie merely in the multitude of the people; but in the number of wise men, to direct and govern all affairs, (XI. 14.) See Arg. [6].

7. *Wisdom is too high for a fool: he openeth not his mouth in the gate.*

commonplished person in all the parts of wisdom; which are above the reach of vain, rash and heady men: who are not admitted either to judge, or to advise in the common Council of the City; where wise men are not afraid, nor ashamed to speak, and that with great authority.

8. *He that deviseth to do evil, shall be called a mischievous person.*

others, is one of the worst of men; and shall be branded with the odious name of *An inventor of evil things*, (I. Rom. 30.)

4. For as true learning and knowledge is the best furniture of the mind;

5. Wisdom also is able to supply the defect of bodily

6. For experience tells us, that victory doth not depend so much upon mighty

7: Who are the more valuable, because it is no easie thing to be an ac-

8. He that deviseth new ways and arts of cheating, or doing mischief unto

9. *The thought of foolishness is sin: and the scorner is an abomination to men.*

folly, is a sin: but he that makes a jest of it when it is done, and laughs at those who tell him it is a sin; is such a pestilent wretch, that he is, or ought to be, extremely abhorred of all mankind.

10. *If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.*

more to despair of deliverance, when thou fallest into any distress, is an argument of great weakness and feebleness of mind: and yet, if thou art remiss in the study of Wisdom in a prosperous condition, thy spirit will be apt to sink, and be dejected in a worse. See Arg. [c].

11. *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain:*

dragged to execution; or are in present danger of losing their life: and do not think, thou canst with a safe conscience withdraw thy self, from succouring them in that distress.

12. *If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not: doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?*

things will pass with God, though they do with men? Canst thou deceive Him with false pretences? Him, that searcheth into the secrets of all mens hearts? Him, that observeth every, the very least, motion of thy Soul? by whose wise Providence, which serves all men in their kind, thou thy self shalt be deserted, as thou hast deserted others. See Arg. [d].

9. To contrive any thing that is hurtfull unto others, though out of rashness and

10. To despond and desist from any good design, much

11. Use thy best indeavours to deliver innocent persons who by false accusations, or other ways, are

12. I know the common excuse which men are apt to make in this case; protesting that they did not understand their innocence, or how to save them: but dost thou think such

13. *My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honey-comb, which is sweet to thy taste:*

as honey is most acceptable to thy palate, both for its wholesomeness, and for its pleasure; especially that pure part of it, which drops of it self immediately from the honey-comb. See Arg. [e].

14. *So shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.*

fary for thee, nothing more delightfull; so, if it be seriously studied and thoroughly digested, it will abundantly reward thy pains, with prosperous success in all thy undertakings; and never put thee in hope of any thing, which shall not answer thy expectation.

15. *Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous: spoil not his resting-place.*

afflicted sometime in this world: but let not that tempt the wicked subtilly to contrive to ruine, much less by open violence to disturb his innocent repose; nay, cast him out of his small habitation, with which he is contented:

16. *For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.*

imaginest he cannot fail to perish in them: he shall overcome them all, and flourish again; when the wicked shall sink under the calamity that befalls them, and never be able to recover out of it. See Arg. [f].

17. *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:*

ble, and not to shew any sign of joy and mirth, when thou seest

13. Do not slight, much less nauseate such precepts as these, my dear Child: but

14. So let that knowledge be to thy mind, which tends to make thee wise and vertuous: for as nothing is more neces-

15. It is possible indeed that a good man's condition may be very mean, nay

16. For though a good man should meet with so many troubles, that thou

17. It is a great piece of wisdom and vertue also, to pity others in their trouble

seeft any man, though he be thy enemy, in a calamitous condition: no, not fo much as (upon thy own account) to take any inward pleasure in his downfall.

18. *Left the LORD see it, and it difpleafe him, and he turn away his wrath from him.*

18. For tho' no body fees it, God doth; and fuch inhumane affections are fo dif-

pleafing to Him, that they may provoke Him to tranflate the calamity from thy enemy unto thee: and thereby damp thy finfull joy with a double forrow; firft to fee him delivered from his trouble, and then to find thy felf involved in it.

19. *Fret not thy felf becaufe of evil men, neither be thou envious at the wicked.*

19. Let not thy anger kindle (or if it do, quench it pre-

not tempt thee to impatience) when thou feeft naughty men thrive and prosper: and do not imagine them to be happy men, and thereby be provoked to follow them, in their impious courfes. See Arg. [g].

20. *For there fhall be no reward to the evil man, the candle of the wicked fhall be put out.*

20. For though a wicked man may live bravely for a time, yet it fhall end

quite otherways than he expected: and his fplendour (fuch as it is) if not in his own days, yet in his pofterity, be utterly extinguifhed.

21. *My fon, fear thou the LORD, and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change.*

21. Take care therefore, my dear Child, that thy Religion (which teaches thee

in the firft place to worfhip, reverence, and obey the great Lord and Governour of all the world) make thee humbly obedient to the King, as God's Vicegerent here on earth: and have nothing to doe with thofe, whofe difcontent with the prefent ftate of things, or their love of novelty, makes them affect a change of Government; and depart from their duty both to God and man. See Arg. [h].

22. *For their calamity fhall rife fuddenly, and who knoweth the ruin of them both?*

22. For an unexpected and dreadful calamity fhall unavoidably

voidably and violently seize on them : but when, and how either God or the King will punish them none can tell ; or what terrible vengeance they will take, both upon those that move rebellion, and those that associate with them. See Arg. [i].

23. *These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment.*

thy life. It is a very evil thing, if thou art a Judge, to consider the quality of the person (either his greatness, or his relation, or the friendship thou hast with him, &c.) and not the merits of the cause, that is brought before thee.

24. *He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous ; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him.*

shall pronounce him innocent, and make a bad cause to be good ; the whole Country shall curse him, and wish the Divine vengeance may overtake him : nay, other Nations, who hear of his unjust proceedings, shall have him in great detestation.

25. *But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them.*

according to their deserts, shall not only have inward satisfaction in their own mind ; but increase of joy, by hearing others speak well of them : nay, God himself, the fountain of all good, shall plentifully bestow his blessings upon them.

26. *Every man shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer.*

Sentence, without fear or favour ; and upon all occasions to speak appositely and consonant to truth : and as such persons give others a singular pleasure, so they shall be beloved most dearly, and honoured by all.

23. These things also that follow, belong to the wise and virtuous conduct of

24. And whoever he be, that contrary to the plain evidence which is given in against the wicked,

25. But they that give a check to vice and wickedness, by punishing evil-doers

26. It is not only justice but kindness, to pass a righteous

27. *Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thy self in the field; and afterwards build thine house.*

self with a little hutt in the field, till thou hast gotten an estate, by a carefull improvement of thy pasturage and of thy tillage: and then it will be timely enough to build thee an house, and to bring a wife into it.

28. *Be not a witness against thy neighbour without cause: and deceive not with thy lips.*

hast no ground at all for thy accusation; nor seduce any body into a false opinion of him, by crafty insinuation; much less suborn them secretly by promises of rewards, to say that which is not true of him; when outwardly thou carriest thy self fair to him, and pretendest to be his Friend.

29. *Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.*

hast now an opportunity to be revenged; let not that tempt thee to resolve with thy self to doe to him, as he hath done to thee: taking upon thee that, which God hath declared belongs to Himself alone (XXXII. *Deut.* 35.) to recompence unto him, according to his deservings.

30. *I went by the field of the slothfull, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding:*

add this observation; which I my self made, as I took a view of the state of my Subjects: among whom I found one so lazy and void of consideration; that though he had good land in the field, and a fruitfull vineyard;

31. *And lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone-wall thereof was broken down.*

27. Do every thing in order: and first mind those things which are most necessary; contenting thy

28. Do not testifie any thing against thy neighbour rashly, much less when thou

29. Suppose I e hath been injurious in that kind to thee heretofore, and thou

30. And, to that which I have just now said (v. 27.) concerning diligence, I will

31. Yet, such was his wretched sloth, instead of corn I was surpris'd with the sight of thorns and thistles,

thistles, which had over-run his whole field; nor was there any thing but nettles to be seen in his vineyard: or if there had been any fruit in either, it would have been lost for want of a fence; which was fald down, and laid all open to the beasts of prey.

32. *Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction.*

32. Which rufull spectacle so deeply affected my heart, and brought so many thoughts into my mind; that I learnt by beholding those miserable effects of idleness, to cure that vice in my self, and to correct it in others.

33. *Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:*

33. And I cannot doe it better, than in those words before used (VI. 10, 11.) If thou wilt not rouse up thy self, O sluggard, but, rousing thy self on thy bed, ridiculously desire thy pains may be spared, and that thou mayst still be suffered without any disturbance to enjoy a little more sleep, and to lay aside all care of thy business, when thou hast loytered too long already.

34. *So shall thy poverty come, as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man.*

34. Then poverty shall come swiftly (though in silent and unobserved paces) upon thee; and, before thou art aware, leave thee as naked, as if thou wert stript by a high-way-man: nay, the most extreme want and beggary shall unavoidably seize on thee, like an armed man, against whom thou canst make no resistance.

*The End of the Second Part of the Book
of PROVERBS.*

THE
THIRD PART
Of the BOOK of
PROVERBS.

CHAP. XXV.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *Here begins the THIRD PART of the Book of Proverbs; which are a Collection made by some belonging to Hezekiah: and acknowledged here (in the entrance of the Book) as well as the former, to be Solomon's. Who spake a great many Proverbs (we reade 1 King. IV. 32.) which no doubt were preserved by his Successors in a Book; if he did not set them down there himself. Out of which Volume, some good men had selected such as they thought most usefull for the people: and besides those in the foregoing Chapters, which had been compiled, either in his own days, or soon after; these also which follow, were thought good to be added in the days of Hezekiah. Who restoring the service of God in the Temple to its purity and splendour (2 Chr. XXIX. 3, &c. XXX. 1, &c. XXXI. 2, 3, &c.) took care in all likelihood for the better instruction of the people in piety, to revive the Schools of the Prophets also: and to press them (as he had done the Priests) to doe their duty faithfully; in teaching*

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the Laws of God, and informing the people in all things that might be profitable for them.

Out of which Schools some were chosen, it is probable, to attend the King himself; who are called his men or servants: who out of their great zeal to promote usefull learning, culled out more Proverbs from among that great heap of three thousand (which would have been too great a bulk to have been all published, and perhaps all of them not concerning manners, or good government) and such especially as they saw would do good to the Prince as well as to the people; of which nature are those that are put into this Collection; many of which belong to the right administration of the publick affairs. I am not able to produce express authority for all this; but I think it may be fairly conjectured from those words, 2 Chron. XXXI. ult. where we reade of the pains Hezekiah took, about the Law, and about the Commandments; as well as about the service of the house of God.

But who the persons were, that he employed in transcribing these Proverbs out of the ancient Records, is more obscure. Some of the Hebrews say, Shebna the Scribe, and his Officers or Clerks that were under the principal Secretary. Others add Eliakim and Joah (who are joyned together with him in 2 King. XVIII. 26, 27.) Others fancy them to have been Eſaiah (a person of great quality, near of kin to the King, and very familiar with him) together with Hoseah and Micah; who all lived in the days of Hezekiah, and might possibly undertake this excellent Work. In which they insert some things, which are to be found, in the foregoing parts of this Book, in words but little different, as v. 24. of this Chapter, and Ch. XXVI. 13, 15, 22. and other places; of which I cannot stay here to give an account.

[b] They begin the Book with a Sentence, which the Lord Bacon applies to all the learning and wisdom of Solomon. "In which, saith he, Solomon challenges nothing to himself, but onely the honour of the inquisition, and invention

“ *invention of Truth: which it is the glory of God*
 “ *to conceal, and the glory of a King to find out.*
 “ *As if the Divine Majesty took delight to hide his*
 “ *works, to the end to have them found out; and as if*
 “ *Kings could not attain a greater honour (or pleasure*
 “ *or recreation either) than to employ themselves in*
 “ *that business: considering the great command they*
 “ *have of wits, and means; whereby the investigation*
 “ *of all things may be effected. Thus be L. VI. of the*
 Advanc. of Learn. Ch. 6.

Which is a very ingenious gloss; if we referr both parts of the Sentence to one and the same matter: tacitely admonishing Hezekiah, and in him all succeeding Kings, not to spend their time in any thing so much; as in searching after truth; and indeavouring to understand not onely the secrets of Government, but of the Laws of God, and of all his Works: that they may not be imposed upon by false colours and deceitfull glosses; which cunning wits are apt to put upon causes that are brought before them; nay, upon the Book of God it self.

But if the words be well examined, they will be found to speak rather of different matters; which God conceals, and into which Kings penetrate. By which some understand one thing, and some another: but taking the word Elohim to relate to God's Government of the World; that which I have said in the Paraphrase, seems to me nearest to the business. And Jansenius his exposition is not forced; who discourses to this purpose. It is part of God's glory that he need search into nothing; because He perfectly knows all things: and yet need not declare that He takes notice of every thing (because he can doe it when he pleases) but rather seem to dissemble his knowledge; in which he wonderfully declares his patience and long suffering towards us. But Kings on Earth must not herein imitate Him; for it is their honour to search diligently and enquire into the state of their Kingdom; and to correct presently what

they find amiss; lest it be out of their power, when it is strengthened by long custom and numerous offenders. But especially in difficult and intricate businesses, covered with darkness and obscurity, perplexed with many windings and turnings, and with crafty and subtle conveyances; there to spy light, and by wisdom and diligence to rip up a foul matter, and searching the cause to the bottom to make a discovery of all, is a thing most worthy of a King, and tends highly to his honour. In short, as it makes for the glory of God, that he need enquire into nothing, but, when he knows all things, yet conceals that knowledge: so, on the contrary side, it makes for the glory of kings, that when they are forced to confess, that they are ignorant as well as other men, of many things; they make such diligent enquiry, that they discover and detect those things, which others have intangled, and would have buried in darkness.

To some such purpose, all Interpreters expound these words, save one: who refer both parts of the Sentence to Kings (understanding by Elohim, Gods, Judges and Princes) in this sence; wise Kings preserve the reverence which is due to their persons and place, by concealing carefully their own intentions and counsels; and by finding out the designs of other men. Thus Maldonate; which I mention, because it is a great truth, though not the sence of the words, but rather the meaning of the following verse, v. 2.

[C] Which concerns Kings also, as some of those that come after likewise do (which would incline one to think this Part of the Book of Proverbs, was particularly collected for the use of Hezekiah) and hath received this gloss from the same great man I named before, the Lord Bacon: who gives this as one of the chief reasons, why the hearts of Kings are inscrutable, because, "they being at the very top of humane desires, have not, for the most part, any particular ends proposed to themselves"

"(none

“ (none at least to which they vehemently and constantly
 “ aspire) by the site and distance of which ends, we may
 “ be directed to take the measure and scale of the rest
 “ of their actions : whereas there is no private person,
 “ who is not altogether like a Traveller, that goes in-
 “ tently aiming at some certain terms of his journey,
 “ where he may stay and rest : from whence one may
 “ probably conjecture, what he will doe, or not doe.
 “ For if any thing conduce to the end at which he aims,
 “ it is likely he will doe it ; but if it crosse his design,
 “ he will not. Therefore he passes this judicious obser-
 “ vation, upon the whole : that Princes are best inter-
 “ preted by their natures, and private persons by
 “ their ends. *Adv. of Learn. B. VIII. Ch. 2.*

But from hence also he observes (in his first Book) that it
 is best not to be too inquisitive to penetrate into the hearts
 of Kings : since we are so ignorant of the things we see
 without eyes every day: which the custom of the Levant
 aims at, that makes it an heinous offence to gaze and
 fix their eyes upon Princes: which is barbarous in the
 outward ceremony, but good in the moral: For it
 becomes not Subjects to pry too far into their Princes
 counsels. But it may as well check the ambition, as the
 curiosity of private persons ; because they can hardly be
 sure of that favour, which they may imagine their Prince
 hath for them : there being such depths in their incli-
 nations and affections as they cannot sound.

But in the next verses Princes are admonished that there
 is no policy like true Vertue, to support their Thrones :
 and that in order to it they should not keep so much as
 one ill man about them: who oft-times corrupts the
 whole Court, and disturbs the whole Kingdom.

[d] And in the next verse he admonishes Subjects, not
 to be vainly ambitious ; nor bold and forward to thrust
 themselves into Offices, or into a rank that doth not be-
 long to them : but to be modest, especially in the Prince's
 presence ; and (according to our Saviour's rule) to be

invited to honour, rather than greedily seek it. And withall he secretly commends to Kings, the care of keeping up their state and dignity: not suffering every body to intrude into their presence, but giving a check to proud, bold and sawey persons.

Then follow private instructions, not to be too forward to go to Law; and when we do, to manage Suits fairly, without aspersing those with whom we contend; and without breaking the Laws of Friendship: which require us, not to discover the secrets wherewith another hath intrusted us, v. 9, 10.

[e] In the eleventh verse I have followed Maimonides his interpretation of the word Maskijoth; in his Preface to his More Nevochim. And it being doubtfull, whether by apples of gold, he mean, apples that look like gold, or apples made of gold; I have expressed both.

[f] But I must not give a particular account of every verse; and therefore I shall onely add, that I have taken the meaning of the 16 and 17 verses to be, that moderation is good in all things, especially in those that please us: As honey doth; which was so plentiful in those countries (as it is in many other) that it was ordinarily found in the woods, and holes of rocks, &c. as may be seen in Bochart. L. IV. C. 12. P. 11. De Sac. Animal.

[g] In the 20th ver. I have followed Melancthon in what he observes out of Pliny concerning nitre (whose nature is not now well known) that it is exasperated by vinegar or lime. But in the latter end of the verse, I have kept to our Translation, which by leb ra understands an heart ill affected by grief or sorrow: which he takes literally for an evil or wicked heart. And makes this the meaning (which some others have followed) that pertinacious sinners, are made more furious by admonitions.

In all ancient Translations there follows after this verse, this Sentence, As a moth in a garment or a worm in wood; so is heaviness in the heart of man. But

S. Hierom

S. Hierom, in the latter end of his Commentaries upon Eſaiah, tells us that it was ſub obelo in Origen's Works, where he noted all ſuperfluous additions, with that mark.

[h] I muſt not omit neither, that the 23d verſe, will admit of a quite contrary ſence, to that in our Tranſlation; and is by ſome rendred thus; As the north wind begetteth rain (for ſo it doth in ſome Climates) ſo a backbiting tongue raiſeth up anger and indignation, (which appear in the countenance, both of him that believes the calumny, and of him that is calumniated; when he knows how he is abuſed.)

[i] There is no great difficulty in v. 26. But Interpreters are divided about this, whether he ſpeak of a juſt man's falling into ſin; or into ſome calamity. Melancthon underſtands the latter, and makes this the ſence, that even wiſe mens minds are extremely troubled, when they ſee the wicked prevail againſt the virtuous: of which he gives a great many examples. But I have taken in both; and have referred it alſo to all manner of ſufferings, and not reſtrained it to publick injuſtice, as the Lord Bacon doth; who hath this excellent obſervation upon the place (Book VIII. Ch. 2. Parab. 25.) This Parable teaches us, that States and Republicks muſt above all things beware of an unjuſt and infamous Sentence, in any cauſe of great importance; eſpecially where the innocent is not abſolved, but he that is not guilty condemned. For injuries ravaging among private perſons do indeed trouble and pollute the ſtreams of Juſtice, yet onely as in the ſmaller rivulets: but ſuch unjuſt judgments, as I mentioned, from which examples are derived, infect and diſtain the very fountain of Juſtice. For when the Courts of Juſtice ſide with Injuſtice, the ſtate of things is turned, as into a publick Robbery; & *Homo homini fit lupus*, and one Man preys upon another.

[k] *With this verse, de Dieu connects the next, v. 27. and gives the easiest account that I find any where, of the Hebrew Text: onely translating that particle, but; which we translate so; as it is often taken in the Scripture. And his sence is this; "Though the just may be trampled under foot for a while by the wicked, yet their glory shall not perish: but remain so fresh and sweet, that it shall be a glorious thing to enquire into their glorious actions. So he would have the verse translated thus, to eat much honey indeed is not good; but to search out their glory (viz. of just men) is glory. And if we take the verse by it self, then the sence may be this, as the Belgick Interpreters translate it (of whom, he, if I mistake not, was one) to eat much honey is not good: but to search into excellent things is a great commendation; and we cannot therein easily offend by excess: which is quite contrary to the Vulgar Latin, whose sence and meaning (though not the words) may be defended, even, without repeating the word not, as we do in our Translation: in this manner; As honey, though pleasant to the taste, oppresses the stomach, if it be immoderately used: so upon a curious search into things sublime and glorious (tho' they be most sweet and desirable to our understanding) we shall find our selves overwhelmed with a greater glory than we can bear. And so the latter part of the verse, should word for word be thus translated: The search of their glory (viz. of things as sweet as honey, but transcending our knowledge) is glory: viz. too bright for our weak minds.*

[1] *The last verse, which in the Hebrew belongs to all men, whose passions are unruly, is by the Vulgar restrained to him that cannot command his tongue: which is part of the sence. For as men may go out of a City without walls when they will; so every thing is blurted out by him, even the greatest secrets; and by too much liberty he disobliges others and undoes himself.*

I. THESE

1. **T**HESE are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.

collected out of his Works, by some of the Servants of that good King *Hezekiah*: who setting himself with all his heart to reform the people of *Judah*; among other things wherein God blessed his endeavours (2 *Chron.* XXXI. 21.) caused these Proverbs to be transcribed out of the ancient records, for their fuller instruction. See Arg. [a].

2. It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.

2. The Almighty Creator and Sovereign of the world declares his supereminent Majesty, Authority and Wisdom (which cannot be ignorant of any thing) and procures to himself the greatest veneration, by concealing the reasons of his decrees, and of his judgments: But earthly Princes, whose knowledge is very imperfect, doe themselves the greatest honour, when they decree and judge nothing but after the strictest search and examination; and give the clearest reason for their proceedings. See Arg. [b].

3. The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable.

3. It is as impossible for vulgar minds to penetrate into the secrets of State, and understand the counsels and designs of wise Princes (and the various ways and means whereby they project to effect their ends) as it is to know how far it is from hence to the highest heavens; or how far to the centre of the earth, upon which we tread. See Arg. [c].

4. Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.

4. As when the Finer hath separated the dross from the silver, it will become so pliable, that he may cast or work it into what form he pleaseth.

5. Take

5. *Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.*

5. So let the King not onely remove the wicked (who are the scum of the Nation)

from his counsels and company, but punish them severely; and his people will be easily moulded to righteousness, piety and all manner of vertue: which will settle his Kingdom in peace, and make his Government durable.

6. *Put not forth thy self in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men.*

6. And among other vertues, learn humility and modesty, if thou art a Sub-

ject: though never so rich: and do not make thy self taken notice of, by too splendid an appearance at Court; much less by intruding thy self into the place, where none but the great Officers or Nobles ought to come. *See Arg. [d].*

7. *For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither: then that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.*

7. For it will be much more for thine honour, and thy satisfaction too, if standing at a distance, thou art invited to

come up higher (whither of thy self thou durst not presume to go) than to have a check given thee for thy forwardness, and to be disgracefully thrust out of the presence of the Prince; unto whom thou hast adventured to approach too near.

8. *Go not forth hastily to strive; lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.*

8. Take some time to consider well, both the goodness of thy cause, and its weightiness, and how to

manage it; before thou bring an action at Law against thy neighbour: lest in conclusion thou wish it had not been begun; when he puts thee to open shame, by shewing thou hast impleaded him wrongfully, or for a trifle.

9. *Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another.*

9. Nay, let me advise thee, though thy cause be just and good (yet the event being

being doubtfull) to debate things privately, and if it be possible to make up the difference between your selves; especially if it be about a secret business, which ought not easily to be divulged: or if it cannot be composed, yet let not hatred or anger provoke thee to discover other secrets, merely to disgrace thy adversary, when they appertain not to the cause.

10. *Left he that beareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away.*

10. Left not onely every one that heareth, reproach thee for thy perfidiousness;

but he be enraged to retort such infamous things upon thee, as shall stick so close, that thou shalt never be able to wipe off the dirt, nor recover thy credit, as long as thou livest.

11. *A word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.*

11. A word of counsel, reproof or comfort handsomely

delivered, in due time, and place, &c. is no less gratefull and valuable; than golden balls, or beautifull apples, presented in a silver net-work basket. See Arg. [e].

12. *As an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.*

12. A good man will not think himself reproached, but rather obliged by a pru-

dent reproof: which meeting with an attentive, considering and patient mind, makes a man receive it so kindly; that he esteems him who bestows it, as much as if he had hung a Jewel of gold in his ear, or put the richest ornament about his neck.

13. *As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithfull messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.*

13. A trusty messenger (or Embassador) that faithfully and dextrously, executes his commission,

to the satisfaction of the persons that sent him; is as welcome, when he returns, as the coldest drink or air is to the Reapers in the time of harvest: for he revives the spirit of his Masters, who were ready to faint, with fear of ill success in his business.

14. *Who so*

14. *whoſo boaſteth himſelf of a
false gift, is like clouds and wind
without rain.*

by performing little or nothing; leaves him, that depended on theſe promiſes, as ſad as the Country people are; after the clouds have made a great ſhew, and the wind a great ſound, but are followed by no ſhowers of rain.

15. *By long forbearing is a prince
perſwaded, and a ſoft tongue break-
eth the bone.*

more eaſily yield to reaſon, if one give way to his heart, and patiently expect the fitteſt time to repreſent things to him: but this muſt be done alſo with ſoft and tender language; which is apt to bow the ſtiffeſt minds, and work upon the hardeſt hearts.

16. *Haſt thou found honey? eat
ſo much as is ſufficient for thee, leſt
thou be filled therewith and vomit
it.*

for thy reſreſhment, not as much as thou deſireſt: for as moderately taken it ſtrengthens the body, and prolongs life; ſo too much of it diſturbes the ſtomach, and turns the pleaſure into pain and torment. See Arg. [f]

17. *Withdraw thy foot from thy
neighbour's houſe: leſt he be weary of
thee, and ſo hate thee.*

Friend (the ſweeteſt thing in the world) do not upon every light occaſion interrupt his weightier affairs: leſt having too much of thy company, it grow not onely troubleſome but loathſome to him; and his love turn into hatred of thee.

18. *A man that beareth falſe
witness againſt his neighbour, is a
maul, and a ſword, and a ſharp ar-
row.*

14. He that raiſeth high expectations by promiſing much, and then deceives them

15. It is not prudent violently to oppoſe a Prince in his reſolutions; who will

16. All pleaſures ſhould be uſed like honey; which, when it offers it ſelf, eat as much as ſuffices thee

17. Which is wholeſome advice, even in the enjoyment of a good Neighbour, or

18. There is nothing more pernicious than him, that makes no conſcience of bearing falſe witneſs

ness against his neighbour: whose tongue alone serves him instead of a maul to beat down a man's fame, or break in pieces his estate; nay, instead of a sword, to take away his life; and of a sharp arrow, to destroy him not onely when he is near, but much more when he is afar off, not able to answer for himself.

19. *Confidence in an unfaithfull man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joynt.* 19. As a broken tooth or leg out of joynt, not onely fails a man, when he

comes to use them, but likewise puts him into pain; so doth a faithless person serve them that depend upon him, when they have the greatest need of his help: and such also is the confidence that a faithless person himself places in riches, or craft, or great friends, &c. which some time or other will disappoint him to his great grief, when he expects the most from them.

20. *As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre: so is he that singeth songs to an heavy heart.* 20. It is as improper to sing pleasant songs to a man full of grief, as to take away his garment from

him in sharp weather, or to pour vinegar upon nitre: for as the one increaseth his sense of cold, and the other irritates the nitre: so such unseasonable mirth makes a sad man's heart, far more heavy and sorrowfull than it was before. See Arg. [g].

21. *If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat: and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:* 21. If he that hates thee be hungry or thirsty, or wants any other necessities, take

that opportunity to express thy kindness to him; by succouring him in his need, and thereby preserving him from perishing.

22. *For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.* 22. For if he have the least spark of goodness in him, it will work a change in

his mind; and make him throw off all his enmities: or if it have the contrary effect, he shall have so much the sorer punishment

punishment; and thou shalt not lose thy reward, which the Lord himself will give thee.

23. *The north-wind driveth away rain: so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.*

23. As the sharpness of the North wind scatters clouds, and drives away rain;

so a severe countenance, full of indignation against him that traduces his neighbour secretly, not onely gives a check, but puts a stop to his slanderous tongue: which would not tell such lyes, if they were not greedily received
See Arg. [b].

24. *It is better to dwell in a corner of the house-top, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.*

24. It is more desirable (as was said before XXI. 9.) to dwell poorly, inconveniently, and alone in the open air, exposed to all the injuries of the weather; nay, to be coopt up in a little corner on the house top; than to have a spacious habitation and numerous family, governed by a contentious, brawling wife: whose perpetual scoldings within doors, upon all occasions, is far worse than the thunder, lightning and blustering winds, which may molest him without.

25. *As cold waters to a thirsty soul: so is good news from a far country.*

25. Good and certain news, especially from a far Country (from whence it is

hard to have any true intelligence) is as gratefull to him, that longed to hear of his Friends there, as cool water is to a thirsty Traveller; especially when he meets with it in remote and uninhabited places, where he did not expect it.

26. *A righteous man falling down before the wicked, is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.*

26. A truly religious, just and charitable man, is such a blessing unto all about him, that they

suffer no less when he is oppressed (and thrown out of authority) by the violence or craft of wicked men, or when he disgraces himself by any foul sin, or loses his courage and dare not oppose impiety; than they do, when dirt and filth is cast

cast into a publick Fountain ; or a spring is stopped up, or corrupted and made useles. *See Arg. [5].*

27. *It is not good to eat much honey : so for men to search their own glory, is not glory.* 27. Honey is very pleasant to the taste; but to eat much of it (as was said before

v. 16.) is so far from being wholesome, that it is hurtfull : and in like manner to hunt greedily after honour and glory, of which men are very desirous, proves at last not honourable, but reproachfull to them. *See Arg. [k].*

28. *He that hath no rule over his own spirit, is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.* 28. He that cannot govern his passions, especially his anger, but suffers them

to break out upon all occasions, lies open to innmerable mischiefs; like a City unwallled, or whose fortifications are decayed; which is exposed to the rapine of every enemy. *See Arg. [l].*

C H A P. XXVI.

A R G U M E N T.

[a] *This Chapter begins with a tacit admonition unto Kings (for whose use principally this last Part of the Book of Proverbs was collected, as I noted in the beginning of the foregoing Chapter) to be very carefull in disposing preferments onely to worthy persons. For bad men are made worse by them; and they doe as much hurt to others, by the abuse of their power to the discouraging of vertue, and promoting vice, as snow or hail doth to the fruits of the earth, when they are ripe and ready to be gathered. So that we may make this Aphorism out of Solomon's words, that the blending of summer and winter, would not cause a greater disorder in the natural world, than the disposal of honour to bad*

men (and consequently throwing contempt upon the good) doth in the world moral: *where wicked men when they are in power, if they can doe no more, will at least pronounce Anathema's against those that do not deserve it.*

[b] So the Hebrews understand the next verse; which I have extended further: and translated also those two words zippor and deror, a sparrow and a wild pigeon (see LXXXIV. Psal. 3.) For deror signifying here a particular bird; in all likelihood zippor doth so too: and then all agree it signifies a sparrow, as the other (Bochart. hath proved) doth (not a swallow but) a ring-dove, or turtle, or some of that kind; which are famous for swiftness and strength of flight. And the meaning of this verse is, that curses which fly out of mens mouths causelessly, shall no more alight where they would have them; than a sparrow which wanders uncertainly, or a dove that flies away swiftly, will settle according to their direction: or thus, such curses fly as swiftly as those birds (whose property it is to wander and fly up and down) over the head of him against whom they are directed; and never touch him.

Melancthon by curses in this place understands calumnies; of which the world is too full: which shall not rest upon a good man long, before they be confuted. But he himself is forced to confess, that sometimes they doe great mischief first; and instances in Joseph, Palamedes, Aristides, Theamenes and Socrates; who lost his life by this means. After which, he observes, the Tragedy of Palamedes being acted (in which the Poet bewailed the death of the best of the Greeks, who sung like a sweet nightingale, but hurt no man) the Citizens expelled the accusers of Socrates out of Athens. But this doth not so well agree with the Hebrew word; which signifies such evil speaking, as amounts to a curse: which the Wise man saith shall not rest upon a man when it is causeless, but fly away like a bird that settles no where till it comes

comes to its proper place: As the curse returns many times, and settles upon him that made it, when it lights not on him that was cursed: which sense, one reading of the Hebrew words expresses plainly enough: and therefore I have not omitted it.

[c] After which observations, there follows another to shew, that a lewd fool should rather be sent to a house in correction, than have any preferment, v. 3. Nothing less will cure him, as it follows v. 4, 5. where he admonishes us, how vain it is to hold any discourse with him; any further than merely to shew that he is a fool; and if it be possible to confute (not what he says, but) the vain opinion he hath conceived of himself. Saint Cyprian hath given a good account of these two verses, in the beginning of his Letter to Demetrian: who having labled a long time against Christianity, like a mad man, with loud clamours onely and no sense, the good Father thought fit to answer him with neglect, and overcome rage with patience; thinking it to no more purpose to go about to repress an irreligious man with Religion, or restrain a mad man with meekness, than to offer light to the blind, or speak to the deaf, or reason with a brute. But when Demetrian at last offered something that lookt like an Argument, St. Cyprian could not any longer keep silence; lest his modesty should be thought distrust of his cause; and whilst he disclaimed to refute false criminations, he should seem to acknowledge the crime.

Melancthon wholly refers both verses to reproaches and calumnies: which he shews it is fit, either utterly to neglect or to confute in a few words.

[d] Then the Wise man proceeds to shew, that such a fool is very unfit to be so much as sent on a message: which he will neither deliver right, nor return a good answer. The first seems to be expressed by cutting off the legs; as much as to say, a business committed to such a person, will no more proceed, than a man can go without

legs: the latter by drinking in injury; as much as to say, instead of having satisfaction in what he desires, he must be content to swallow abundance of affronts and ill dealing.

[e] After this follow several other observations about Fools; in some of which, there are words of no small difficulty: which I cannot here particularly explain, as some may desire, because it would take up too much room. But I have expressed the sense of them as well as I could, in the Paraphrase. As for example, the word *Dalju* v. 7. signifying something of elevation or lifting up, I have explained dancing; than which nothing is more unsuitable to a lame man: as speeches full of reason in themselves, are most absurd, when wittlesly applied by a fool.

[f] And the word *Margema*, in the 8th verse, which is very variously translated by Interpreters, I have expressed in two senses of it: but look upon it as superfluous to trouble the Reader with what learned men (such as Scaliger and Selden, &c.) have written concerning the heaps of stones in the high-way, into which superstitious people were wont to cast one as they passed by, in honour of Mercury, &c. For I do not think this custom was as old as Solomon's time. Nor is it necessary to understand such a heap of stones, as covered the dead bodies of those who were stoned to death: but in general any heap of pebles; or else a sling, as the Chaldee and the LXX. whom we follow, expound it.

[g] And v. 10. the first word *rab*, great, may be applied either to God, or to a Prince: and that either good or bad. All which I have taken notice of; and expressed the different senses wherein the word *cholalti* is used. But there is one signification more of the word *rab*, which the Lutherans generally follow (which I think fit to mention here, because I have not touched on it in the Paraphrase, and it makes no improper sense of the place) who take it for a Master in any sort of Art or Learning; and expound it thus: A master in his art forms all things

things excellently well : but he that hires a fool (or a bungler, *as we speak*) gives his money to have his work spoiled. Thus Melancthon; who takes it to be an Admonition belonging to prudence in the choice of fit persons for every business; not believing those that crack and brag what they are able to doe, &c. ex. gr. plurimi sunt impostores, qui volunt videri medici: plurimi indocti concionatores, qui adulantur vulgo aut potentioribus. And he heaps up many excellent sayings to this purpose, that men should meddle onely with that which they understand: concluding with this Admonition to the people, which they should always remember; Ignorance makes men impudent. And thus Castalio took the word rab; but to this sense, A wise man does his business himself; and not by fools, who marr it all.

[h] Among other examples of the Wise man's observation v. 11. Melancthon mentions this; which is not commonly noted. The Sodomites being divinely delivered by the help of Abraham, who overthrew the Army that had spoiled them, and recovered the spoil; forgetting their former punishment and marvellous deliverance, ran furiously into more foul sins, wherein they utterly perished, by a most terrible vengeance.

[i] Then follow, after one observation concerning a conceited fellow, several observations about Sloth: some of which had been noted before in the foregoing parts of this Book, but are here put together by the men of Hezekiah in some order; and with some additions. For here seem to be three degrees of sloth represented. The first, when a man is loth to stir out of doors, about his business in the field, v. 13. the second, when he is loth so much as to leave his bed, v. 14. and the third and highest, when he will scarce put his hand to his mouth, v. 15. by which hyperbolical expression he most admirably sets forth the incredible laziness of some men; which increases upon them continually, if they will not

shake it off. And yet so presumptuous (he observes v. 16.) they are withall, that they laugh at those, who take a great deal of pains to be wise: and fantasie themselves much wiser, because, without any pains, they can find fault sometime in other mens Works. Nay, this very thing perhaps, they think a piece of folly, to study hard; imagining it to be the greatest wisdom, to enjoy their ease and reap the benefit of other mens labours.

After which follows an Admonition against rash intermeddling in other mens affairs; against backbiters, and dissemblers; especially such as are malicious; and cover the malignity of their minds, under fair shews of love, or perhaps of Friendship. In several of which verses the words are capable of more sences than one; which I have endeavoured to knit together in the Paraphrase. An example of which I might give particularly, in v. 24. where the word *jinnaker* may be rendred either he pretends to be what he is not, or he is known to be what he is.

[k] And what Solomon says in the next verse concerning him that flattereth another, some extend to all wicked men; none of which are to be trusted: but, as one of our own Writers advises, though a wicked man have done thee seven courtesies, and promise fair for the eighth; yet do not trust him: for there are seven abominations in his heart. And though thou mayst think thou hast some hank upon him, do not depend upon it; for he can unfetter himself from them all, as *Samson* from the green withs and cords, wherewith the Philistines bound him, unless God mightily restrain him.

[l] But I onely observe one thing more; that the last verse is capable of this sence; which I have in part touched: A Lyar is not capable to be a Friend; for if he be reprehended, truth makes him hate the person that detects his falshood: if he be not reprehended, his fulsome flatteries will alienate from him, the mind of his Friend.

1. **A**S snow in summer, and as rain in harvest; so honour is not seemly for a fool.

hurt in summer time, when the fruits of the earth are ready to be gathered: so is dignity and authority very ill placed in the hands of a fool or wicked man; who knows not how to use it, but will doe mischief both to himself and others with it. See Arg. [a].

2. As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.

is no reason to fear such rash imprecations or unjust censures: for they shall doe no harm (unless it be to him that makes them) but pass by the innocent like a sparrow, that wanders no body knows whither; or a wild dove, than which few birds fly away more swiftly. See Arg. [b].

3. A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.

without a goad, or will go onely his own way, without a bridle to turn about his stiff neck; are fit emblems of a senseless sort: who must be treated like a beast, and by smart punishments be excited unto his duty, to which he hath no list; and check'd from running into that evil, to which he is inclined.

4. Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.

contend, observe these two Rules: Answer him not at all, because it is to no purpose; at least, not in his own way, with bawling, railing and reproaches, which is to be as very a fool as himself. See Arg. [c].

1. **A**S snow or rain are so unseasonable, that they doe a great deal of

2. Though men are too prone in their passion to wish evil to others, or by mistake to pronounce solemn curses against them; yet there

3. A horse that will not stir without a whip, and an ass that will not go

4. For words will not reclaim a wicked fool; with whom if thou hast occasion to

5. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.

then say so much onely as may serve to take down his presumption, and make it appear that he is a fool: for nothing is more dangerous, than to let him go away with an high opinion of his own abilities.

6. He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool, cutteth off the feet, and drinketh damage.

treat about his business; shall be sure not onely to miscarry in it, but to suffer exceeding great damage by his ill management. See Arg. [d].

7. The legs of the lame are not equal: so is a parable in the mouth of fools.

lameness never so much appears, as when he would seem nimble; so the others folly is never so ridiculous, as when he would seem wise. See Arg. [e].

8. As he that bindeth a stone in a sling: so is he that giveth honour to a fool.

away which is bestowed upon a fool: who not knowing how to use his authority (unless it be to doe mischief, even to him that conferred it on him) it is as ill placed in his hands, as a diamond when it is cast into a heap of common stones. See Arg. [f].

9. As a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so is a parable in the mouth of fools.

drunkard to handle a thorn; wherewith he hurts himself: but the sharpest saying, no more touches a fool with any compunction, though spoken by his own mouth; than the drunkard feels the thorn, when it runs into his hand, and gives him a grievous wound.

5. But if he grow insolent by thy silence, fancying that he is unanswerable;

6. He that sends a witless man, or one that minds nothing but his pleasure, to

7. A wise saying as ill becomes a fool, as dancing doth a creeple: for as his

8. As a stone put into a sling, stays not long there, so is that honour thrown

9. It is as dangerous for a fool to meddle with a Proverb, as for a drunken

10. *The great God that formed all things, both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressours.*

10. The great God, who made all things, governs them also most wisely and e-

qually; dispensing, for instance, his punishments suitable to mens sins, whether out of ignorance, or of wilfull wickedness: whom a good Prince imitates; but a bad proves an universal grievance, by employing either fools or prophane persons in his service; who vex the rest of his subjects. See Arg. [g].

11. *As a dog returneth to his vomit; so a fool returneth to his folly.*

11. As a dog when he hath vomited up the meat which made him sick, is no sooner

well but he returns to it and eats it up again; forgetting how ill it agreed with him: so an imprudent person commits the same error over again, for which he formerly smarted; and a lewd sinner shamelessly and greedily repeats the crimes, of which he hath repented as grievous and hurtfull to him. See Arg. [h].

12. *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.*

12. Such a fottish person is hardly curable: and yet if he be not altogether in-

sensible of his folly, nor refuse admonition; there is more hope of his amendment, than of his who takes himself to be so wise and vertuous, that he despises his betters, and thinks he is above instruction.

13. *The slothfull man saith, There is a lion in the way, a lion is in the streets.*

13. He that hath no mind to labour, never wants pretences for his idleness:

for his fancy represents such terrible and insuperable difficulties to him, as seldom happen; and frights him with a vain conceit of them, when he might soon satisfie himself, there are none at all. See Arg. [i]. See XXII. 13.

14. *As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothfull upon his bed.*

14. As a door turns to and fro upon its hinges, but never stirs from hence; so

so is a sluggard fixed to his bed : where he turns from one side to the other (and is uneasie even in his sloth) but still remains in his idle posture.

15. *The slothfull hideth his hand in his bosom, it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.*

15. All things seem so hard to such a lazy wretch, that it is not easie to perswade him to pull his hand from under his arm : but even this appears like a tiresome business, though it be onely to put his meat into his mouth. See XIX. 24.

16. *The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason.*

16. Yet one of these idle companions, whose wit serves him onely to prate, and carp at mens honest labours; takes himself to be much wiser than a great many able persons, who can give a satisfactory account of any thing that is proposed to them.

17. *He that passeth by and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.*

17. As he that takes an angry dog by the ears, is in danger to be bitten; whether he hold him, or let him go: so he that furiously ingages in other mens quarrels, whom he lights upon by chance, and in which he is not concerned, shall hardly escape the displeasure of one or both of them, which soever part he takes, or if he take neither.

18. *As a mad man who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death:*

18. As he that throws flames, darts, or other deadly or destructive thing, and hides his malice by feigning himself mad; is far more dangerous than he that is mad indeed :

19. *So is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport ?*

19. So he is worse than an open enemy, who cunningly abuses his neighbour, and under a fair shew puts foul cheats upon him; and then asks him, why he resents it so heinously ? for he was onely in jest; and intended merely to try how he would take it.

20. *Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth.*

and expell him from the family which he hath disturbed by backbiting: for as the fire will go out, if you take away the wood that feeds it; so will quarrels and contentions cease, when he is thrust out of doors that blows up the flame.

21. *As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire: so is a contentious man to kindle strife.*

every thing: for provoking language as quickly passes into quarrels, as dead coals do into burning, or wood into fire, when they are laid upon them.

22. *The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.*

shew of harmles intentions; and of love and kindness, when he traduces others; nay seems perhaps to doe it very unwillingly, and with great grief of heart; and not without excuses also, for the persons whom he backbites: for his words are stabs, which give them the most deadly wounds; and sink deep into the minds of those that hear them. See XVIII. 8.

23. *Burning lips, and a wicked heart, are like a potsherd covered with silver dross.*

piece of a broken pot: and he that studies to hide his hatred under most affectionate words, will as certainly be detected and vilified; as a potsherd that makes a fair shew at a distance. when it is covered merely with the scum of silver.

24. *He that hateth, dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him.*

terfeit the greatest kindness to thee; when he means thereby

20. Look upon him as an incendiary, that carries tales, and whispers false stories;

21. Avoid also an angry man, who is hard to please, and apt to find fault with

22. But there is never need of greater caution, than when a whisperer makes a

23. Ill and angry language suites as well with ill will as silver dross with a

24. And yet there is nothing more usual, than for him that hates thee, to counter

thereby onely the more easily and securely to deceive and undoe thee: though let him study never so much to disguise his inward rancour, he commonly lets fall some word or other, whereby it may be discovered; nay, it may be known sometime by his extraordinary expressions of Friendship, beyond all reason and measure.

25. *When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart.*

25. And thou wilt the more certainly discover it, if thou observest this Rule,

not to be too credulous; no, not when he gives thee the kindest words, and beseeches thee to believe him: but to remember, that if hatred still remain in his heart; it will suggest to him the most detestable designs against thee, and that without number. See Arg. [k].

26. *Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the whole congregation.*

26. And it were well, if such a man would think, that it is hard for him to carry

on his malicious designs so craftily, but, though a private person may not be able to find out his wickedness, yet, when he comes to be examined by the publick Council, some or other will discover it: and then that dissembled hatred, which he thought to have hid in secrecie, will be openly exposed to the view of all the world.

27. *Who so diggeth a pit, shall fall therein: and he that rowleth a stone, it will return upon him.*

27. For by the righteous judgment of God (as hath been anciently observed

VII. Psal. 15. IX. 15.) the wicked are not onely disappointed in their designs, but involve themselves in that mischief, which they intended to doe to others: just like a man that falls into a pit, digged with his own hands; or that is crushed in pieces by a stone, which returns upon him, as he rowls it up a steep place for the oppression of another.

28. *A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it, and a flattering mouth worketh ruine.*

28. A forger of falsehood is not content to undoe others by his calumnies, but his guilt makes him hate those men above all others; unless
it

it be him that confutes his falshood and proves him a liar: whom he cannot endure, because he disables him from doing any farther mischief unto others; which is the design of all his glosing and flattering words, which prove at last the ruine of himself. See Arg. [1].

CH A P. XXVII.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *This Chapter begins with a most usefull Admonition, of the inconstancy and uncertainty of all things here below: like to which there are a great many in other Authors, which several Writers have collected (but I shall not trouble the Readers withall) particularly Melancthon: who observes that the Wise man here teaches us modesty; and prohibits these two great vices: confidence in our selves, or any thing we have; and rash undertaking unnecessary things, out of a foolish hope they will succeed according to our desires. Wise and good men should onely meddle within the bounds of their calling; and depend also on God for his blessing: but not attempt things without just cause, presuming they can carry them as they please. Thus Pericles, says he, made an unnecessary War, for a sleight reason; which many then judged ought to have been neglected: and Alcibiades in like manner passed over into Sicily: and Hannibal made war upon the Romans: and Pompey would needs try his fortune (as they called it) in War, when he might have kept peace, upon honest conditions. All these were destructive to their Countries, and the Proverb was verified in them μάταια λόγισσαι δὲ ὀνειδύειαι, Vain men devise vain things, according as their desires lead them.*

[b] *And*

[b] And there is nothing more foolish than the vanity of praising themselves; which follows in the next verse (v. 2.) and is noted by all Authors; who have many sharp sayings about it, which I also pass over. But shall take notice (because it is still more usefull) what the same good man Melancthon observes upon the third verse; that fools and unskilfull people are more apt to be angry than others: because they consider not the infirmity of mankind, and that there are many errors of others which ought to be born withall, and cured after a gentle manner: whence that true saying Imperito nunquam quicquam injustius est. But as goodness is most eminent in God; who himself bears with many evils in us, and commands us to forgive and it shall be forgiven us: so wise men bend their minds to goodness and lenity; remembering the common infirmities of all men, their own as well as others. Nor can there be a more lively picture of the implacable spirit of a fool, than that which our Saviour himself hath drawn in the Gospel; of a cruel Servant, who when he had been forgiven sixty tonne of Gold by his Master, would not forgive his fellow-servant an hundred pence, Matth. XVIII. This Sentence of Solomon therefore, saith he, admonishes us to avoid the company of fools, qui neque cognoscere neque agnoscere norunt; as well as to be so wise our selves as to moderate our passions, and to be mindfull of humane weaknes. For nihil magnum quod non est placidum, as Seneca speaks: like unto which he adds other sayings out of Homer and Pliny.

[c] In the next verse but one some think the Wise man speaks of such Friends as are too tender and delicate; and for fear of offending others, have not the courage to tell them of their errors: whom the great Lord Bacon follows; and thinks Solomon prefers an open Enemy before such a Friend: which I do not take to be the meaning; but shall here set down his excellent observation upon these words (Adv. of Learn. Book VIII. Ch. 2.

Parab.

Parab. 29.) "The Parable, saith he, reprehends the
 "soft nature of such Friends as will not use the privi-
 "lege which Friendship gives them, in admonishing
 "their Friends with freedom and confidence, as well of
 "their errors as of their dangers. For what shall I
 "doe? says such a tender-hearted Friend, or which
 "way shall I turn my self? I love him as dearly as
 "any man can do another: and if any misfortune
 "should befall him, I could willingly pawn my own
 "person for his redemption. But I know his dis-
 "position; if I deal freely with him, I shall offend
 "him; at least make him sad: and yet doe him no
 "good. And I shall sooner estrange him from my
 "Friendship, than reclaim him from those courses,
 "upon which his mind is resolved: Such a Friend
 "as this, Solomon here reprehends as weak and worth-
 "less, and says that a man may reap more profit from a
 "manifest Enemy, than from such an effeminate Friend:
 "For he may perhaps bear that by way of reproach from
 "an Enemy, which, through too much indulgence, was
 "but faintly whispered by a Friend.

[d] And one great reason why men are loth to tell others
 of their faults, is because they are wont to take it bei-
 nously. If men were more willing to receive reproof, others
 would more faithfully give it: of which the Wise man
 therefore admonishes us, v. 6. where the word Nataroth
 is so difficult that it admits various interpretations:
 some of which I have expressed in the Paraphrase. And
 made v. 7. a caution against the immoderate enjoyment of
 pleasures: which commend themselves to us, by their
 rarer use. As the next, v. 8. is a caution against un-
 settledness of mind, and discontent with our present
 condition; which not onely spoils all our pleasures, but,
 often carries men restlessly to their ruine: where Me-
 lanchthon suggests this usefull Meditation, that there is
 no condition of life, no function, without its cares, trou-
 bles and dangers; which makes men soon weary of it:
 according

according to the ancient saying, Optat ephippia bos piger, optat arare caballus. But the wise man would have us understand, that nothing is more dangerous than this; and therefore to take care, lest tired and broken with disgusts, we lightly desert that kind of life, to which we are rightly called. All the ancient wisdom hath observed, that such desultory humours never thrive: about which they have many Proverbs, with which I shall not fill these Papers.

[e] After this follow some advices about Friendship, and other things; which have been noted before, in the foregoing parts of this Book. And then he seems v. 14. to lay open the guise of Flatterers, who hope to curry favour with their Benefactors, by extolling their bounty with extravagant praises. So I have expounded that verse, not merely of those that praise others, but praise them for their kindness to themselves: as the word Barak properly imports. The intention of which is onely to get still more from them: which is commonly the end of all those, that praise others immoderately, for their rare qualities and perfections; hoping thereby to make them extraordinary kind to them, above all other men. Thus the Lord Bacon hath observed about this matter: whose gloss upon these words is this (in the forenamed place, Parable 33.) “ Moderate and seasonable praises, uttered upon occasion, conduce both to mens fame and fortune; but immoderate, streperous and unseasonably poured out, profit nothing: nay, rather according to the sence of this Parable, they doe much prejudice. For, first, they manifestly betray themselves, either to proceed from too much affection, or from studious affectation; whereby they may rather ingratiate themselves with him whom they praise by false commendations; than adorn his person by just and deserved attributes: secondly, sparing and modest praises commonly invite such as are present to add something of their own to the commendation:

contra-

“ *contrariwise, profuse and immodest praises invite the
 “ bearers to detract and take away something that be-
 “ longs to them: thirdly (which is the principal point)
 “ too much magnifying a man stirs up envy towards
 “ him: seeing all immoderate praises look like a re-
 “ proach to others, who merit no less.*

*But beside this, I cannot quite pass by the gloss which some
 have made upon these words: who by jafchkem babbó-
 ker (which I have applied onely to their too much assi-
 duity in praising others; as if one should say, from morn-
 ing to night) understand making too much haste to
 praise men; when it is, as we speak, but early days
 with them: and they have made no progress in those
 vertues for which they are commended. And then the
 sence is, there is nothing more dangerous, than to
 cry up men too soon, for their parts or for their
 vertues; before they be sufficiently tried, and have
 made a due improvement: for this, instead of doing
 them service, proves many times their ruine: ma-
 king them, that is, entertain a vain opinion of their
 one worth, and grow idle; or negligent; &c. and so
 dwindle away to nothing.*

[f] *What he saith afterward of a railing wife, v. 16.
 may be thus expressed, in short: There are three things
 that cannot be concealed; because they betray them-
 selves: the wind, a strong perfume, and a scolding
 wife: with which some joyn the next verse, v. 17. as
 a remedy for the mischief of a brawling wife; and thus
 render it: as iron is easily joyned with iron; so is a
 man with his equal. And therefore the best way for a
 man to avoid the trouble of a bad wife, is not to chuse
 one for his consort, because she is rich, or because she
 is beautifull onely; but because she is like him in humour,
 and inclination, and condition, &c. Thus the Tigur-
 ine Version. And de Dieu to the same purpose; who
 makes this Proverb, no more than that of like to like;
 which best agree together. But this is too narrow;*

and therefore I have followed ours, and indeed all the ancient Translations: who take this to be of the same signification with another old saying, one man is no body; and therefore God hath formed us to have a communion with each other. The necessity of which is expressed in abundance of ancient Aphorisms; which admonish us to conferr with others, and to hearken to the counsel and judgment of the wise. And daily experience shews us how dangerous it is ἰσοβελεύειν, to be a man's own counsellor: and what is said of Artificers may be applied unto all; every man is his own worst Master. To which purpose Melancthon alledges that of Euripides ἐμυλία ἔτεκε τέχνας, conversation brought forth arts: when men, that is, not onely observed one anothers works; but conferred their thoughts together; and assisted one anothers inventions. " And he pertinent-ly observes, that the Christian Doctrine, in the beginning of the Reformation, was corrupted by those, who would not hear others: but skulk't like bats that fly the light; and devised new opinions out of their own heads, abhorrent from the approved form of Doctrine. Tales multi nunc sunt, &c. There are many such now adays, who glory that they are αὐτοδιδασκαί, and admire their own dreams; refusing to hearken to the sound judgment of other men. But let us, saith he, be obedient to such precepts as this: which includes in it, first Modesty, in consideration of our own frailty; and then Prudence, in advising with those, who may teach us that of which we are ignorant. Thus he observes out of Synesius, that Apelles was wont to make Lysippus the Statuary, Judge of all his Pictures: and Lysippus on the other side, made Apelles Judge of all his Statues; before they would expose them to be seen by others.

[g] The next verse but one, v. 19. is understood so variously by Interpreters, that it is a labour to number their expositions: some of which are directly contrary to the

the other. For according as they take the face to be represented in water ; either perfectly, or so lubricously and moveably, that it is hard to discern what sort of face it is: so they make it either easie, or impossible to understand the hearts of other men. Melancthon took it in the latter sence ; inculcating the old wholesome Lessons, Μένεινός εἰς αὐτήν, and Quos credis fidos, effuge, tutus eris, &c. But now it is generally expounded the other way : and some expound it of mens own hearts, and some of the hearts of other men. I have in the Paraphrase expressed two of those interpretations, which I look't upon as most simple. And think fit here to mention that of Castalio, who applies it to a man's self in this manner: as a man may know what kind of face he hath, if he will look into the water: so he may know what kind of man he is, if he will examine his Conscience. And this of Maldonate who is alone (as far as I can find) in his exposition, which is this, as a man's face may be seen in the water ; so his heart, or his inward affections, may be seen in his Countenance: taking man in the conclusion of the Sentence, for the outward man, i. e. his countenance: and making the Hebrew run thus, as a man's face is answerable to that face which appears in the water: so his heart is answerable to his countenance. The Lord Bacon, as I have expressed it in the beginning of my Paraphrase on this verse, takes the end of this Parable to be, " to distinguish between the mind of wise men, and of those that are not wise: comparing the former to waters, or glasses which receive and represent the form and images of things; whereas the other are like to earth or rude and unpolished stone, wherein nothing is reflected. And the mind of a wise man (which is so capable that it observes and comprehends an infinite diversity of natures and customs) is the more aptly compared to a glass or mirror ; because in a glass he can see his own image, together with the images of other men :

*" which his eyes cannot do alone without the help of a
" glaſs.*

And ſo this Parable, it ſeems to me, may not unfitly be expounded after this manner: A man may ſee himſelf while he looks upon other men; as well as know other men, by conſidering his own inclinations.

[h] *This Preface is already ſo long, that I muſt not mention the various interpretations of the twenty firſt verſe. I have expreſſed that which is neareſt to our Tranſlation; and ſeems to be the trueſt touchſtone of this ſort, whereby to try the goodneſs or badneſs of mens minds. Some of which are ſo incorrigible, he ſhews in the next verſe, that the ſoreſt afflictions will not amend them.*

[i] *And then in concluſion he preſſes every one to diligence about his own buſineſs: and eſpecially commends the paſtoral care which men ſhould have about their flocks and their herds: which are the beſt ſort of poſſeſſions, he ſhews, in ſeveral regards. Firſt, becauſe moſt durable, for they are always increaſing of themſelves, v. 24. Secondly, becauſe eaſily preſerved without much labour, or fraudulent arts; God himſelf providing liberally for them, v. 25. Thirdly, becauſe moſt profitable; yielding all things neceſſary for food and rayment, v. 26, 27.*

[k] *Where he mentions particularly in the laſt verſe, the milk of the goats, and of no other creature: becauſe they had abundance of them, and their milk was in daily uſe; both for meat and for medicine. And for medicine the Ancients preferred it before all other, as moſt moderate, and temperate. So Galen and Paulus Ægineta; the laſt of which writes thus: Woman's milk is the moſt temperate of all other; next to that goats; and next to that aſſes: then ſheep; and laſtly cows milk. From whence it was (Bochartus conjectures who hath heaped up a great deal on this Subject, L. II. de Sac. Animal. Cap. ult. Part. I.) that Jupiter, a King in Crete about Abraham's time (and look'd upon afterwards*

wards as the greatest God) is said to have been nourished by a goat: that is, by the best of nourishments.

1. **B**Oast not thy self of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

to grow presumptuous, and brag what thou wilt do, or enjoy hereafter: for thou canst not be secure of this very day (wherein thou makest such large promises to thy self of the future) which may produce something, for any thing thou knowest, that shall spoil all thy designs, and frustrate all thy expectations, which thou hast for to morrow. *See Arg. [a].*

2. *Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger and not thine own lips.*

cent and imprudent, for others will only the more undervalue thee: but take care to do praise-worthy things, which will force commendations even from strangers and foreigners, who cannot be thought too partial to thee; for this will make thee truly honourable.

3. *A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty: but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.*

but neither of them is so intolerable as the effects of a fool's wrath which cannot be shaken off so soon as they may be: for he cannot easily be appeased by us, nor can he moderate himself; till his anger hath carried him to the most barbarous cruelty. *See Arg. [b].*

4. *Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?*

ty, but is transported by his violent passion beyond all bounds (like an inundation of waters) yet his wrath appearing openly, it may be avoided, and in time it is composed and allayed; nay, perhaps he repents of it: but *envy* (or a

1. **B**E not so confident of thy present power, riches or any thing else, as

2. Be not so blinded with self-love, as to praise thy self; which is both inde-

3. We feel there is heaviness in a stone, and that a bag of sand is a weighty load;

4. And yet envy is still worse than this; for though in a fury a man hath no pi-

desire of revenge) is a lurking evil, which increases daily without remorse; and is more exasperated by time, till it find some means or other to do the mischief it desires.

5. *Open rebuke is better than secret love.*

of their faults, and rebuke them freely, when need requires, to their very face, is a better Friend, and more valuable (tho' perhaps he please them less) than he that hath more of the passion of love in his heart, but makes it not known by such good effects. See Arg. [c]

6. *Faithfull are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitfull.*

to be thankfully accepted, because they proceed from his care of us, and fidelity to us: but the most tender expressions of kindness from an enemy, ought to be suspected, to be false and treacherous; especially when he heaps them upon us in great abundance, and with such earnestness and seeming passion, that we had need to pray him to forbear, and pray God to preserve us from being too credulous. See Arg. [d]

7. *The full soul loatheth an honey-comb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.*

loath the most delightfull: so poverty hath this advantage of plenty, that it disposes men to be thankfull for the smallest blessings, though mixt with care and trouble; when the richer sort if they be not very carefull, are apt to be unsatisfied with, nay to nauseate their most delicious enjoyments, upon which they have a long time surfeited.

8. *As a bird that wandreth from her nest: so is a man that wandreth from his place.*

it self to danger, and cannot easily settle again: so he whose levity, or discontent, makes him rashly leave his country, or trade, or office, wherein he was well placed, too often

5. He that takes an ingenuous liberty to tell others plainly

6. Just reproofs, though never so smart and severe from one that loves us, ought

7. As hunger makes men relish the most distastfull food, when full stomachs

8. Men seldom change for the better; but as a bird that forsakes its nest exposes

ten undoes himself, but rarely mends his condition. *See* Arg. [d].

9. Ointment and perfume rejoyce the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.

they droop and are tired: so doth the very presence of a true-hearted Friend, and much more his faithfull counsel, rejoyce a man's soul; especially when he is at such a loss, that he knows not how to advise himself.

10. Thine own friend and thy fathers friend forsake not; neither go into thy brothers house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near, than a brother far off.

rather than to thy natural Brother or Kinsman, if he be not also thy Friend: and above all other, chuse a Friend near thee, if it be possible; for as a man that is closely joyned unto us in near affection, is better than one of our nearest kindred, whose heart is not knit to us; so a good neighbour near at hand, is better than either Friend or Brother who is so far off, that we may perish before he come to our assistance.

11. My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me.

thee a being, let such precepts as these make thee wise and good: which will both give me the highest joy, and furnish me with an answer unto such, as are apt to object the child's miscarriages, to want of care in his parents.

12. A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.

and circumspect, foreseeing a calamity before it comes,

9. As Balsam and fragrant perfumes marvellously refresh and comfort the natural spirits, when

10. Forsake not therefore a Friend, whom thou, or thy Father before thee hath tried and found sincere; but betake thy self to him when thou art in distress,

11. My dear childe if thou hast any love for him, that was the instrument of giving

12. He whose long experience and observation of things, hath made him cautious

withdraws

withdraws himself in good time from the danger, into a place of safety : but inconsiderate and credulous persons are so easily abused by crafty men, that they not onely quite overlook the mischief which even they intend against them, and go on securely in their accustomed track till it overtake them; but make haste to fall into it, notwithstanding any caution that is given them.

13. *Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.*

13. It is a great weakness to trust him who is so rash, as to be bound for one whose ability and honesty is utterly unknown to him; especially for a woman whose way of life makes her credit justly suspected : therefore have nothing to doe with such an inconsiderate person; without the utmost security that he can give thee for the payment of what he owes thee.

14. *He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.*

14. He that spends all his time in nothing else but proclaiming his praises extravagantly, who hath bestowed great benefits upon him, disparages rather than commends his Benefactor; in doing so much for a base flatterer: who magnifying rather his own deserts than the others bounty, incurs hereafter his just displeasure. See Arg. [e].

15. *A continual dropping in a very rainy day, and a contentious woman are alike.*

15. He is in an ill case, the roof of whose house is so ruinous, that in a very rainy day, when he shall be wet if he go abroad, cannot be dry at home: and he is no better, that hath a scolding wife, who torments him her self if he stay at home; and makes him tormented with the jeers of others, if he go abroad.

16. *Whosoever hideth her, hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand, which bewrayeth it self.*

16. For it is altogether as impossible for him, to keep the wind from blowing, and from being heard when it blows; or to inclose a fragrant

grant perfume in his hand, so that it shall not be smelt; as to make her hold her tongue, or to conceal her bawling humour, which she her self proclaims. *See Arg. [f].*

17. *Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.* 17. As nothing is more natural, so nothing more powerful than society: for

as iron is sharpened and brightned by iron, so one wit whets another, one friend encourages and cheers another; nay, all sorts of passions are stirred up, and men are made either good or bad, by mutual conversation. *See Arg. [f].*

18. *Who so keepeth the fig-tree, shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.* 18. As he that diligently looks after the fig-tree (especially whilst it is young and tender) and preserves

it from suffering by drought, by vermin, or by wild beasts, &c. shall at last eat of its pleasant fruit: so he that faithfully defends his master's person or reputation, and takes care his estate be not wasted, shall in due time be largely rewarded by him for his integrity.

19. *As in water face answereth to face: so the heart of man to man.* 19. The inclinations and designs of other men appear as plainly to the mind

of those that are wise, as their faces appear to themselves in the water: where, as every man will find such a countenance represented to him (whether fowre or smiling) as he brings when he looks into it; so he ought to expect no other affections from others, but such as he expresses towards them. *See Arg. [g].*

20. *Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.* 20. The appetite of man is as unsatiable as his eyes, which still desire some new

sight: and are as far from being filled with all that they have seen, as the infernal places with all the souls they have received; or the grave with all the bodies it hath devoured.

21. *As the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold ; so is a man to his praise.*

21. As gold and silver is tried by putting it into the fire; which discovers whether it be pure or adulterate; so a man is discovered what he is, by trying how he can bear praises, commendations and great applauses; which will presently shew either the virtue or the vanity of his mind. *See Arg. [b].*

22. *Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar, among wheat with a pestel, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.*

22. The folly and wickedness of some men is so incurable, that though, unto reproofs and chidings, and threatnings, you should add stripes and blows; nay, beat and knock them, like wheat in a mortar; bruising their bodies, till (as we speak) they are black and blue, they would not grow a whit the wiser, or the better for it.

23. *Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.*

23. Whether thou art a private person or a Prince, let me advise thee to look after thy business thy self; and not to trust merely to thy servants and ministers: but goe sometimes and take an exact survey of the state of thy affairs; and more particularly make it part of thy care to visit thy flocks and thy herds, and know in what case they are. *See Arg. [i].*

24. *For riches are not for ever : and doth the crown endure to every generation ?*

24. For as no riches are so durable as these, which increase and multiply continually; so the greatest estate, even in these, unless it be well managed, will in time be brought to nothing: nay, the crown it self will not continue to many generations, without due care to preserve its revenue; of which these ought to be thought the best and most lasting portion.

25. *The hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth it self, and herbs of the mountains are gathered.*

25. For the maintenance of which the earth brings forth plentifully, without any more pains of thine,

thine, than onely in the spring time to drive the flocks and herds into pastures; and to look after them, when the earth brings forth grass and young herbs for their food; and to gather hay in due season, which even the mountains afford, for their fodder and winter provision.

25. *The lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are the price of thy field.*

26. And if thou takest care to preserve them, they will preserve thee: for the

sheep and the lambs will afford thee wool to make thee clothes; and with the price of thy goats thou mayst purchase a field, for the sowing of corn to make thee bread.

27. *And thou shalt have goats milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and for maintenance for thy maidens.*

27. And both of them, especially the goats, shall yield thee milk enough for thy own food, and for

the sustenance of all thy family; both men servants and maidens: who may hence be provided with all things necessary for their livelihood. See Arg. [k].

CHAP. XXVIII.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter consists, as the foregoing did, of several mixt observations: some belonging to the concerns of private persons; others to the publick.

[a] *It begins with the difference between a good and a bad Conscience; which discovers it self, when there is any danger, of which men are apprehensive. And in the next verse, he observes the difference between a Nation, when it is bad and when it is good: when its manners are depraved, they fall into confusion: and when they grow better (for most interpreters take the word Adam in the latter part of the verse collectively, for the body of the people) then they keep their Government, and live happily. Especially when they have a wise and prudent*

prudent Prince; who is here also to be understood, in opposition to many Princes, either together or successively: by whom a Nation is miserably harassed, when its wickedness brings upon it such a punishment. So Melancthon understands v. 2. "The complaints, saith he, are very usual concerning the negligence of Princes, their exactions, oppressions, want of care to administer justice, &c. and the people still accuse them and their Court: but God accuses both Princes and people; and for the sins of the people, he gives them ill Governments; as Solomon here teaches, that for the transgression of a country, i. e. both of Prince and people, many are the Princes thereof: that is, none reign long; or many reign together, opposing and thrusting out one another. Now for the cure of this he gives a singular Admonition, necessary both for Prince and people, which is this: that a prudent and wise man makes Empire durable. That is, a wise Prince will sometime depart from his own right to quiet things; and suffer some inconveniences to prevent greater: as Fabius and Cicerodid. And on the other side, people are to be advised, lest they draw greater mischiefs upon themselves by seditious counsels than those which they study to remedy.

[b] And there is none greater he seems to tell us in the next verse (v. 3.) than when power comes into the hands of a beggarly fellow: who is void of all humanity, and forgets even what he himself was, and all the miseries of poverty; which he perpetuates upon them who are poor already. So Maldonate (and he alone I think) expounds that phrase *veen lechem*, and there is no food, to signify, before the corn be grown out of the earth: and by the sweeping rain understands not such rain as beats out the corn when it is in the ear; but which washes away the seed before it spring up. Even so, he that spoils the poor, takes away from them, after a manner, what they have not; and extirpates the very seed of future riches,

riches, which he deprives them of all means of gathering. Upon which subject the Lord Bacon hath discoursed very ingeniously in his VIIIth Book of the Advancement of Learning, Ch. II. Parab. 24. "This Parable, saith he, "was by the ancients expressed and shadowed forth under the fable of two horse-leeches; one full, and the other hungry. For oppression coming from the poor and "necessitous person, is far more grievous than that of "the rich and the full; because it seeks out all tricks for "exactions, and leaves no corner unsearch'd where money may be found. This kind of oppression was wont "also to be resembled to sponges; which being dry suck "in strongly; but not so, being moist. And the Parable "comprehends in it a profitable instruction, both to "Princes and to people. To Princes, that they commit not the government of Provinces or Offices of "charge to indigent and indebted persons: And to "the people, that they suffer not their Kings to "struggle with too much want.

But none have glossed better upon this place, than an excellent Prelate of ours, Bishop Sanderson in his Sermon upon XXIV. Prov. 10, 11. where he discourses to this effect. "That it is in matter of power, as it is in matter of "learning. They that have but a smattering of scholarship, it is observ'd, are the forwardest to make ostentation of the few scraps they have, for fear there should "be no notice taken of their learning, if they should "not shew it when they can; and yet then they doe it so "untowardly, that when they think most of all to shew "their scholarship, they most of all, by some gross mistake or other, betray their ignorance. Even just "so it is in the case of power, when men of base spirits "and condition have gotten a little of it into their "hands; who conceive their neighbours will not be sensible what goodly men they are, if they do not by some "act or other, shew forth their power to the world: But "having minds too narrow to comprehend any brave "and

“ and a generous way to doe it ; they cannot frame to
 “ doe it by any other means , than by trampling upon
 “ those that are below them ; which they doe beyond all
 “ reason, and without any mercy.

Which he illustrates very handsomely upon 1 Sam. XII. 3.

“ If a mean man, says he, in any of our Towns or Ham-
 “ lets, be a little gotten up to overtop most of his neigh-
 “ bours in wealth ; or be put into some small authori-
 “ ty, to deal under some great man for the disposing his
 “ farms or grounds ; or have something to sell to his
 “ necessitous neighbour, who must buy upon that day ;
 “ or have a little money lying by him to furnish ano-
 “ ther ; who, to supply his present needs, must sell off
 “ somewhat of that little he hath, though at an un-
 “ der rate ; or the like ; it is scarce credible (did not
 “ every days experience make proof of it) how such a
 “ man will skrew up the poor wretch that falls into his
 “ hand, &c. conclude hence, all ye that are of gene-
 “ rous births and spirits, how unworthy that pra-
 “ ctice would be in you ; wherein men of the lowest
 “ minds and conditions can, in their proportion, not one-
 “ ly equal, but even exceed you : which should make
 “ you not onely to hate oppression, because it is
 “ wicked ; but even to scorn it, because it is base.

[c] *After this, follow several bad characters of other
 men : and among the rest of him that oppresses his brother
 by usury and increase v. 8. where these two words,
 Neschech, and Tarbith, do not seem to signifie, greater
 extortion, and more moderate gain. For all usury is Ne-
 schech, as it respects the debtor of whom it is taken ;
 and Tarbith, in respect of the creditour who is the gain-
 er by it ; whether it be great or less, that the one gives
 and the other receives. If there be any other difference
 between these two ; it either lies in this, that there
 were several sorts of usury whereby men increased their
 estates ; or the one signifies the advantage men made of
 their money, and the other the advantage they made
 of*

of their goods. About which I do not think fit to trouble the Reader any further: nor to examine whether their opinion be true, who say; the King was to take away their unjust gain, and give it to better men. I have left that undetermined, whether God or man should punish the Usurer, but have expressed all that the Law forbids in this case: which was to take interest (as we speak) of their Brethren, especially of their poor Brethren; which some think are onely meant: but I have contented my self to say, are principally meant.

[d] *And in the next verse but two (v. 11.) he observes that such men as grow rich, though it be by fraud or oppression, are apt to have a mighty conceit of their own wisdom: which understanding men, though never so poor, see thorow, and discern to be, at best, but craft: and many times to be no more than that, which we call purse-pride, when they have no more wit, but just to save and hoard up money. Upon which place some observe that Solomon secretly intimates riches to be an impediment to wisdom; and poverty a great advantage: because the one is apt to blow men up into a vain opinion of themselves; and the other to make them humble and modest: the former of which is the greatest Enemy, and the latter the best Friend to Wisdom. Certain it is, that money having so large a command, as to be able to purchase not onely dignity, but great veneration from the multitude; they that have it, are apt to look no further neither for wisdom nor vertue: which made a confident of Cæsar's (as the Lord Bacon observes) give him this counsel, that if he would restore the decayed state of the Roman Commonwealth; he must by all means take away the estimation of wealth: for these, saith he, and all other evils, together with the reputation of money, shall cease; if neither publick offices, nor any other dignities, which commonly are coveted, be exposed to sale. And the truth is,*

saith that Lord (Advanc. of Learn. Book I.) as it
was

was rightly said that blushing is the colour of vertue, though sometime it come from vice; so we may truly affirm that poverty is the fortune of vertue, though sometime it may proceed from misgovernment and improvidence. And he adds further, that the magnificence of Princes and great men, had long since turned into barbarism and rudeness; if the poverty of Learning had not kept up civility, and decency of life.

[e] For bad Princes, Solomon shews, v. 12. bring great contempt and misery upon a Nation; as all bad men (v. 13, 14.) bring mischief upon themselves. But no Princes are more grievous to their Subjects, than such as are needy, and yet have no goodness. So I understand, with the LXX. verse 15. where that word we render raging, is well translated by the Vulgar an hungry Bear, as Bochartus hath shewn.

[f] Who also seems to me, to have expressed the sence of the next verse most fully; when he observes, that according to the manner of the Hebrew Language, there is something wanting in one part of the verse; which is to be supplied out of the other. As when the Psalmist saith in LXXXIV. Psal. 11. one day in thy courts, is better than a thousand; he means elsewhere, out of his courts. And XCI. Psal. 7. a thousand shall fall on thy side (viz. the left hand) and ten thousand on thy right hand. In like manner we are to understand this verse, as if he had said, A Prince that wants understanding and is a great oppressour, shall shorten his days: but he that hates covetousness shall prolong them. See Par. I. de Animal. S. L. III. C. 25.

[g] In the two next verses I have endeavoured to connect several Sences together; as he that examines them will perceive. And in v. 21. have taken some notice of the Lord Bacon's observation; that men may be bribed by something else besides money, to pervert justice: and more commonly by other respects than by that. His words

words are these (B. VIII. Advanc. of Learn. Ch. II. Parab. 23.) Easiness of humour in a Judge, is more pernicious than the corruption of Bribes. For all persons do not give bribes; but there is hardly any cause, wherein somewhat may not be found, that may incline the mind of the Judge, if respect of persons lead him. For one man shall be respected as his Countryman, another as an ill-tongu'd man, another as a rich man, another as a favourite, another as commended by a Friend; to conclude, all is full of iniquity wherespect of persons bears sway: and for a very slight matter, as it were for a bit of bread, judgment is perverted.

[h] *The rest of the Chapter contains plain observations, concerning several sorts of good and bad men: and concludes with the repetition of a remark, he had made before v. 12. about the state of publick affairs; which are then in an ill condition, when bad men get into authority. For vertuous men begin then to be so ill treated, that they fly or hide themselves; to avoid the abuses which they see will be put upon them. This the LXX suggest, when they translate the first clause of the verse, thus; in places where the impious bear sway, the righteous sigh and groan; i. e. some are imprisoned, and sent into obscurity, by the unjust prosecution of the wicked; and others obscure themselves, and groan in secret under those oppressions; till there be a turn of affairs (which Solomon here intimates they may expect in due time) by the fall of those wicked persons, and the preferment of better: which invites vertuous men to appear again; and by the countenance they then receive, to propagate piety among the people: who are so ready to conform themselves to the example of their Governours, that there is no blessing we should pray for so earnestly as this; especially when the days are evil. Then that saying of the Son of Syrach should be perpetually in every good man's mind, to support and comfort him; when*

he is constrained perhaps to lie hid and conceal himself, to avoid trouble and danger, the power of the earth is in the hand of the Lord, and in due time he will set over it one that is profitable, X. Eccclus. 4. *reade the foregoing verses.*

1. **T**HE wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.

hearted Souldier who runs away at the appearance of an enemy, and never so much as looks back to see whether he pursue him: but men of integrity are not easily affrighted; but proceed like a young Lion, with an undaunted resolution, even in hazardous undertakings.

2. *For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof: but by a man of understanding and knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged.*

to factions, every one thinks himself fit to govern; and, throwing down one ruler after another, they can come to no settlement, till they grow better and more considerate: and then, some truly prudent and pious person arises; who takes the right course to heal these breaches, and prolong the Government in peace and tranquility. See Arg. [a].

3. *A poor man that oppresseth the poor, is like a sweeping rain which leaveth no food.*

is got into power; but hath lost all sense of the miseries of the poor: whom he squeezes and spoils; like a violent rain, which instead of refreshing the corn, as gentle showres doe, beats it down and lays it so flat; that it can never recover; but a famine comes upon the land. See Arg. [b].

4. *They that forsake the law, praise the wicked: but such as keep the law, contend with them.*

1. **A**N evil conscience makes men timorous and cowardly, like a faint-

2. There are many mischiefs that people draw upon themselves by their wickedness, and this especially; that falling in-

3. But there is none more wicked and intolerable, than a needy fellow, that

4. From such a man there is none so wicked but he shall receive encouragement;

ment; For they that make not the Law of God their rule, but their own lusts, will employ and promote the vilest person, and find something or other to commend him for: but they that resolutely observe God's Law, are so far from approving such a wicked wretch; that they oppose him; and declare, as we say, open war against him.

5. *Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD, understand all things.* 5. For the minds of men, that give up themselves to wickedness, are so depraved,

that some time they do not so much as understand, and at no time regard the difference between right and wrong; much less the difference that God doth and will make between them: but men piously affected understand, and consider, all things of this nature so exactly, that they are careful not to offend, in the least, against their neighbour.

6. *Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.* 6. An honest upright man, that acts sincerely in all that he doth, though he be never so poor, is far

happier and more usefull and commendable, than a crafty person, that knows how to wind and turn himself every way; though by his fraud and tricks, he grow never so rich and great, v. XIX. 1.

7. *Who so keepeth the law, is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men, shameth his father.* 7. He that studies the Law of God, and observes the rules of sobriety and temperance and other ver-

tues which it prescribes, is likely to prove a wise Son; in whom his Parents may find comfort: but he that had rather go into merry company, than into the School of the Wise, and there spend his time and his money in sensual pleasures, is a shame, as well as a vexation to them.

8. *He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.* 8. He that increases his estate by usury, for the money or goods which he lends to his poor Brother

(contrary,

(contrary to the Laws provided in that case XXII. *Exod.* 24. XXIII. *Dent.* 19, 20.) shall not be able to make his family so great as he intended; but those riches shall be translated into some other hands; which will exercise that charity, which he neglected. See Arg. [c].

9. *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.*

9. He that refuseth to hearken unto God and to obey his Laws, deceives himself, if he thinks by his prayers to please Him, and make an amends for his crimes; for God will be so far from hearkning unto him, that he will abominate such prayers as tend to nothing, but to make God a partner with him in his sins.

10. *Who so causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: but the upright shall have good things in possession.*

10. He that studies by false suggestions, and deceitfull representations, to seduce upright men into dangerous practices, shall fall himself irrecoverably into that very mischief, which he designed for them: while they preserving their integrity, shall remain not onely safe, but in a flourishing condition.

11. *The rich man is wise in his own conceit: but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out.*

11. A man, whose labours and cares have such success, that he grows very rich and is courted and complemented by every body; is apt to fantasie himself much wiser than other men: but when a man of mean condition, who applies himself more to understand the value of things than to get riches, comes to discourse with him; he easily discovers, and makes it appear, that he is but a fool. See Arg. [d].

12. *When righteous men do rejoyce, there is great glory: but when the wicked rise, a man is hidden.*

12. When the righteous are advanced to places of trust and authority, there is excessive joy among all vertuous men; and the whole Kingdom feels the happy effects of it, in beautifull order, peace, security and plenty

plenty at home; and in the honour and reputation it hath abroad: but when the wicked get up into power, it makes a rufull change; being wholly employed in finding reasons to ruin others; whose safety then lies in concealing themselves and their estates. *See* v. 28.

13. *He that covereth his sins, shall not prosper: but whose confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

impudent denial, that he shall make himself obnoxious to severer punishments: but he that ingenuously acknowledges he hath done amiss; and not onely promises to doe so no more, but gives some proof of his amendment, shall obtain pardon both from God and man.

14. *Happy is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart, shall fall into mischief.*

pious fear and dread of God and of his displeasure in his mind; and be cautious and circumspect in all his actions: for if he be presumptuously confident and careless, and because God is so gracious regard neither his commands nor his threatnings; he will fall back into deeper guilt, and misery.

15. *As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler over the poor people.*

when hunger presses them to seek a prey, than a needy Prince, who fears not God and loves not man, is to the poorer sort: who have not wherewithall to fill his unsatiable desires; and yet are the surest to be invaded, because the least able to resist his power. *See* Arg. [c].

16. *The prince that wanteth understanding, is also a great oppressor: but he that hateth covetousness shall prolong his days.*

grievously oppress and pillage his people; which makes his

13. He that studies to hide or extenuate, rather than to leave his sins, shall be so far from escaping by his

himself obnoxious to

14. From which happiness if he would not relapse, let him constantly preserve a

15. A lion and a bear, are not more dreadfull to the weaker beasts, especially

16. But it is very great ignorance not onely of Religion, but of all things else, that makes a Prince

reign short, as well as unhappy: when he that, hating such exactions, is kind to his Subjects, prolongs his days in much tranquility. See Arg. [f].

17. *A man that doth violence to the blood of any person, shall flee to the pit, let no man stay him.*

ed by the avenger of blood, flies to save himself, shall never think himself safe; but lead a restless life to his very grave: for all men looking upon him as a common enemy shall refuse to succour him; no, though they see him falling headlong into a pit, which he is not aware of, they shall not stop him, but let him perish.

18. *Who so walketh uprightly, shall be saved: but he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at once.*

actions; for he that indeavours to preserve himself by fraud and deceit, tho' he can wind, and turn, and hath several shifts he thinks to save himself, yet in one or other of them he shall perish: for the time will come, when he will blindly chuse the wrong course; and commonly when he begins to fall, he sinks utterly and cannot possibly recover himself.

19. *He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain persons, shall have poverty enough.*

ding sufficiently, if not plentifully for himself and his family: but he that is careless, and follows the courses of loose and wicked companions, can reap no other fruit of his negligence, but the most miserable want and beggary.

20. *A faithfull man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich, shall not be innocent.*

God, and be well spoken of by men: but he whose eager desires make him heap up wealth, by right or by wrong, brings such guilt upon himself, as makes him execrable unto both.

17. He that murders a man, and pressed with the weight of his guilt or pursued

18. There is no such way to be safe, as to be honest and sincere in all a man's words and

19. He that is a good husband in the management of his estate, shall have the satisfaction of providing

20. He that is true to his word, and just in all his dealings, shall have abundance of blessings from

21. *To have respect of persons, is not good: for, for a piece of bread that man will transgress.*

son, and not the merits of the cause that is brought before him: For though perhaps at the first he could not be corrupted under a great sum of money, yet, having accustomed himself to it, he will at last sell his Sentence at the lowest rates; nay, be moved by the smallest considerations to forsake the rules, which ought to guide him. See Arg. [g].

22. *He that hasteth to be rich, hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.*

without grudging, is push'd on, by his impatient desires, to get riches, without making any distinction between good and evil: never considering, in that disturbance of mind wherein he lives, that all may be gone in a moment; and he then stand in need of the mercy of those, whom he would not pity.

23. *He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.*

at the first: but when he considers that he could have no other end in it but his good, he will have a greater kindness for such a man, than for one that humours him in every thing; and with flattering words soothes him up in those faults, which he ought to take the freedom to reprehend.

24. *Who so robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression; the same is the companion of a destroyer.*

no sin, or no great one (pretending they keep him too short, and have no need of it themselves, or do not use it, &c.) not onely keeps the company of spend-thrifts; but is wicked enough to be a high-way man, and murder others to feed his own luxury.

21. It is a wicked thing in a Judge to incline to consider the quality of the per-

22. An envious covetous wretch, that cannot look upon what another hath

23. He that rebukes a man for his evil courses may displease him, nay, anger him

24. He that lays hands upon all that he can rap and rend from his father or mother, and thinks it is

25. *He that is of a proud heart, stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD, shall be made fat.*

lives in perpetual quarrels, so hath no satisfaction in what he enjoys; nay, many times wastes it all in suits and contentions: but he who, confiding in the good Providence of the Almighty, hath an humble and contented mind, lives peaceably with others, and comfortably within himself; nay thrives many times and abounds with plenty of all good things.

26. *He that trusteth in his own bearr, is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.*

follows the conduct of a fool: but he that, distrusting himself, takes good advice and follows it, escapes many mischiefs, into which the other rashly runs; and is delivered out of many dangers, in which the other perishes.

27. *He that giveth unto the poor, shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.*

thereby procure God's blessing to increase his estate: but he that regards not the miseries of others, nor is willing so much as to know them, for fear of having his compassion moved towards them, shall draw upon himself the curse of God as well as men; and fall into many and grievous misfortunes.

28. *When the wicked rise, men hide themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase.*

ring such onely as are like to themselves: it makes good men scarce; who are forced to withdraw, and hide themselves from their tyranny; but when they perish (as they shall at last) and good men come in their place, then the righteous openly shew themselves; and the number

25. A man of a proud and insolent spirit, of ambitious and vast desires, is never quiet; but as he

26. He that relies wholly upon his own judgment is like to miscarry; because he

27. He that relies those that are in want, shall be so far from wanting himself, that he shall

28. When wicked men are advanced unto power and authority, they favour

number of them increases, by their example, and by the encouragement they enjoy under righteous Governours. See Arg. [b].

CHAP. XXIX.

ARGUMENT.

[a] *This Chapter concludes the Collection of Proverbs, made by the men of Hezekiah; and contains more advices proper to a Prince (as he was) than any of the rest: but ushers them in, with a general admonition, how dangerous it is not to profit by reproofs or corrections (such as He and his people had by the hand of Senacherib) which when they work upon mens spirits there is some hope of them: but when they become refractory, inflexible and obstinately reject them, they are near to a final destruction. This wicked temper of mind, he expresses by hardning the neck: which is a Metaphor, as Bochartus truly observes (L. III. de Sacris Animal. C. 41. P. 1.) taken from Oxen; who being put forward draw back and withdraw their necks and shoulders from the yoke: and sometimes are so headstrong and stiff-necked, that they cannot be brought to submit to it: unto which the Scripture often alludes, both in the Old Testament and the New: for instance, XXXII. Exod. 9. VII. Act. 51. And hither belong those expressions XLVIII. Isa. 4. where he saith his people had an iron sinew, &c. and that in V. Jer. 5. where he saith they had broken the yoke and burst the bonds.*

[b] *Then follows a tacit Admonition unto Princes, to be good, by describing the happiness which a Nation then enjoys: which they had noted twice before in the foregoing Chapter, v. 12 and 28. but thought it so considerable and so needfull, that they insert it here again; and*

the latter part of it once more, v. 16. Being a famous observation of his father David, XII. Psal. 9. where he takes notice, how the wicked flourish, and go about confidently into every place, nay, take the liberty to do as they list, when men of no account are exalted to power: who take no care to oppose growing wickedness, and to keep every man within the bounds of his duty.

[c] *And after an Admonition (v. 3.) that the study of wisdom is the onely preservative against the lust of uncleanness; which, in the preface to this Book it is observed, destroys abundance of young men, and their estates also (for lust is very blind, and very prodigal) the next observation (v. 4.) is concerning Kings again: where ish Terumoth, which we translate a man that receiveth gifts, is in the Hebrew phrase a man of oblations. For so the word Terumoth always signifies, throughout the whole Bible, the heave offerings which were offered to God: which would make one think that ish Terumoth (a man of heave offerings) signifies here, a Prince that is sacrilegious; and robs the Church of its proper goods: or, if we will not take it in that strict sence, it denotes one that will suffer himself to be pacified by gifts, and bribed to wink at the most enormous crimes, which he ought to have severely punished: or, that is so unjust, as to find fault, perhaps with the most innocent persons, on purpose that they may appease him, by offering him a part of their estate to save all the rest: one or other of these is the most literal exposition of the words. But I have contented my self with the LXX. (who render it μεγαυμος) to use onely general expressions in the Paraphrase which include all these; and whatsoever else that is contrary to the duty of his office. Rabbi Solomon doth not differ much from the sence of the LXX. when he translates it, a proud man, who heaves and lifts up himself in his own thoughts, imagining he is above all laws, and not bound to observe them.*

[d] *In*

[d] In the next verse (v. 5.) I have not wholly neglected the sense of the LXX. who referr the last clause to the flatterer himself: who cannot escape the hatred of those, whom he hath ruin'd by his pernicious praises, or base compliances, with all their humours, &c. which is more fully expressed in the following Sentence, v. 6. where I have interpreted one part of the verse by the other.

[e] And then seems to follow again, a double admonition to Princes, or those that govern under them. First, not through laziness or contempt to refuse to examine a poor man's complaint, and doe him right, v. 7. secondly, not through prophaneness, pride, or carelesness to scorn admonitions; especially any warning that is given of danger, &c. v. 8. For when he says the righteous considers the cause of the poor, he seems to mean a righteous Prince, or Judge (and so I have explained it in the Paraphrase) for who else is to consider of the din (as it is in the Hebrew) the cause of the poor which is to be judged? None, but they, and the Advocates who are to plead it: all which persons are obliged in conscience, to search into the truth of things; not to be sparing of their pains (though matters be intricate, though the labour be like to be long, though they shall get nothing by it) to find out the bottom of a business: which he that refuses to doe, nay, perhaps rejects the complaint of the poor, or beats them off with bugg words; or, out of the hardness of his heart, or the love of ease, or fear of great men, or any other respect will not give them audience, or not consider and redress their grievance; Solomon pronounces him a wicked, an impious person; and accordingly God will proceed against him.

[f] Such men indeed may scorn these threatnings, nay, laugh at them: but thereby they will endanger the bringing all things into confusion; as Solomon observes in the succeeding words, v. 8. where men of scorn (as it is in the Hebrew) signifie such as mock at Religion, and at all things that are serious: whom the LXX. call

ἀνομοί, lawless, pestilent men; that regard neither God nor man, but onely their own wicked humour: which brings the Kingdom or place where they live into the greatest danger. Which we express by the word insatiate; and other Translations by words of the like import: which I have expressed in the Paraphrase, but shall not mention here, because I would leave room to insert the most admirable discourse of the Lord Bacon upon this verse.

" It may seem strange, saith he, (B. VIII. Advanc. of
 " Learn. Chap. II. Par. 12.) that in the description
 " of men, made and framed, as it were, by nature
 " to the ruine and destruction of a State, Solomon
 " hath chosen the character not of a proud and insolent
 " man, not of a tyrannical and cruel, not of a rash
 " and violent, not of an impious and lewd, not of an
 " unjust and oppressive, not of a seditious and turbu-
 " lent, not of an incontinent and voluptuous, no nor
 " of a foolish and unable person: but of a SCORNER.
 " But this is a judgment most worthy the wisdom of
 " that great King, who best knew the causes of the con-
 " servation or subversion of a State. For there is not
 " commonly the like plague unto Kingdoms and Common-
 " wealths, as when Counsellors, or Senators, and such
 " as sit at the helm of government, are by nature scor-
 " ners. For first, such persons, that they may win the
 " reputation of undaunted Statesmen, do ever extenu-
 " ate the greatness of dangers: and insult over those
 " who give them their just weight, as timorous and
 " faint-hearted people. Secondly, they scoff at all mature
 " delays, and meditated debates of matters by consulta-
 " tion and deliberation, as a thing too much tasting of an
 " oratory vein, and full of tediousness; but nothing con-
 " ducting to the sum and issue of business. As for Fame
 " (thirdly) at which a Princes Counsels should especi-
 " ally level, they contemn it as the spittle of the vulgar,
 " and a thing that will quickly be blown over. The pow-
 " er and authority of Laws (fourthly) they regard not

" as

“ at all; but look upon them as Cob-webs, that ought
 “ not to stop matters of consequence. Fifthly, counsels,
 “ and precautions, foreseeing of events afar off, they
 “ reject as mere dreams and melancholy apprehensions.
 “ Sixthly, men truly prudent, and well seen in affairs,
 “ of great resolution and counsel, they defame with gibes
 “ and jests. In a word, they do at once overturn all
 “ the foundations of civil Government: which is the
 “ more to be attended, because they secretly undermine
 “ it, and do not assault it by open force. And it is a
 “ practice which is not yet so suspected among men, as
 “ it deserves.

[g] The latter end of the next verse (v. 9.) some referr
 to the fool, others to the wise man. They that referr it
 to the fool understand it two ways, much to the same pur-
 pose. Some thus, the fool will alway be angry or de-
 ride, so that the wise man cannot put in a word.
 Others thus, the wise man shall be either irritated, or
 derided by the fool perpetually. As much as to say,
 he shall get nothing, if he contend with a fool, but either
 to be derided or provoked to anger by him. This I have
 taken some notice of, in my Paraphrase: but the other,
 being the most common opinion, that he speaks of the
 way of a wise man's dealing with a fool, I have prin-
 cipally regarded. And the Lord Bacon hath made this
 very pertinent reflexion upon it (in the forenamed Book
 and place Parab. 3.) which it will be profitable to set
 down here. “ It is accounted a wise rule, not to contend
 “ with our betters: but it is a no less usefull admoni-
 “ tion, which Solomon here gives us, not to contend
 “ with a worthless person; whom we cannot meddle with-
 “ all, but upon disadvantageous terms. For to overcome,
 “ is no victory; but to be conquered a foul disgrace.
 “ And it is all one, in the management of this conten-
 “ tion, whether we deal sometime in a jesting way with
 “ him, and sometime in a way of disdain and scorn.
 “ For which way soever we turn, we shall come off
 “ with

“ with the loss of our credit, and not be able handsomely to disengage our selves. But the worst of all is, when the person with whom we contend hath something of the fool in him (as Solomon speaks) That is, if he be both witless and wilfull: have some heart, but no brain.

[h] The tenth verse I have expounded of a Magistrate, that hath the courage to make inquisition after, and prosecute notorious offenders: and, in the latter part of it, have put two senses together. As I have done also in the next (v. 11.) where the word Ruach, Spirit, being differently interpreted, hath produced several expositions. For some take it to signifie anger; others to signifie words, or the sense of the mind. They that take it for anger, expound it thus, A fool shews all his anger immediately, but a wise man keeps it in, till he hath a fitting opportunity, to express it most to purpose. If we understand it of words, the sense is; a fool blurts out every thing that comes in his head, but a wise man speaks onely as much as is necessary. If it signifie the sense of the mind, then this is the meaning, a fool utters all that he knows; but a wise man conceals many things. But the great person before named (in the same Chapter Parab. 15.) thinks none of these hit the mark. “ For this Parable, saith he, corrects principally, not the futility of vain men, who utter easily as well what ought to be kept secret, as what may be spoken; nor the bold liberty of such as without discretion and judgment, fly upon all men and upon all matters; nor talkativeness, which troubles others even to a surfeit; but another vice more close and retired, viz. that government of discourse, which of all other is not prudent and politick. And that is, when a man so orders his discourse, in private conferences; as whatsoever is in his mind, which he conceives any way pertinent to his purpose, out it comes at once, and, as it were in one breath, and in a
“ continued

" continued speech. *This is that which doth much pre-*
 " *judice business. For first a speech broken off by in-*
 " *terlocutions, and instilled by parts, penetrates deeper*
 " *than that which is continued: because that in a con-*
 " *tinued discourse the weight of things is not precisely*
 " *and distinctly taken; nor by some convenient pauses*
 " *suffered to fix: but one reason drives out another,*
 " *before it be thoroughly settled in the mind of the hearer.*
 " Secondly, there is no man master of such powerfull
 " and happy eloquence, as to be able, at the very first
 " dash, as we speak, to strike him dumb and altogether
 " speechless, with whom he discourses: but he will have
 " something to answer, and perhaps to object on the o-
 " ther side. And then it falls out that those things,
 " which should have been reserved for replication and
 " refutation, being disclosed already and tasted before-
 " hand by this unadvised anticipation, quite lose their
 " strength and their grace. Thirdly, if a man do not
 " pour out all he hath to say at once, but deliver him-
 " self by parcels; now one thing, and anon casting in
 " another; he shall perceive by the looks and the answer
 " of him, with whom he discourses, how every particu-
 " lar passage affects him, and what acceptance they find
 " with him: so as what is yet remaining to be spoken,
 " he may with the greater caution, either suppress,
 " or select what is to his purpose. Thus that great
 person: who herein hath followed the LXX. who ex-
 press the sence, rather than translate the words, in this
 manner; a man void of understanding brings out his
 whole mind: but a wise man dispenses it part by
 part.

[i] The like observation he makes upon the next verse (v.
 12.) where by lyes, or words of fallhood (as the He-
 brew hath it) the LXX. truly understand *ἀδίκον ἄδικον*,
 an unjust report, that hurts our neighbour by calumnies,
 or false accusations (as the word commonly signifies in Scrip-
 ture, particularly Psal. LII.) unto which if a Ruler
 lend

lend his ear, he will never want lewd Informers or rather Slanderers in his Court to work upon that inclination. Melancthon hath observed upon this verse, that the love of lyes (as he translates it) comprehends a great many vices: according as there are divers sorts of lyes: which are all repugnant to that eminent Vertue of Truth; in which a Prince ought to excell, viz. vanity or perfidiousness, breach of promises, calumnies, suspicions, sophistry; which defends bad causes by colourable pretences to please great men; and perswades the Prince by plausible arguments, that he is tied to no rules: unto any of which if a Prince be inclined; his Ministers will not fail to make him break his word perpetually; to abuse him with false stories; to infuse into his mind unjust suspicions; and to find colours for any thing, though never so wicked: of all which he gives examples.

But none hath opened this Parable comparably to the Lord Bacon, in the place before-mentioned (Parab. 13.)

“ where he takes it for an easie credulous temper, in a
 “ Prince, to believe Detractors and Sycophants without examination. From whence proceeds such a pestilential breath, as infects and corrupts all his Servants. For some of them feel out the fears and jealousies of the Prince, and increase them by fictitious tales. Others, awake and stir up the furies of envy; especially against all those that are best deserving in the State. Others seek to wash away their own guilt, and the stain of a foul conscience, by defaming better men. Others promote the suits of their friends, and their preferments, by traducing and debasing the merit of their competitors. Others compose fabulous representations of their enemies, as if they were upon a stage; and innumerable such like. And these are the arts of such of the Prince’s Servants, as are of a more wicked disposition. As for those, who are by nature better inclined, and by education more civilized, when they
 “ perceive

“ perceive their innocence to be no safe sanctuary (their
 “ Prince not knowing how to distinguish between truth
 “ and falsehood) they put off the probity of their man-
 “ ners, and accommodate themselves also to the air of
 “ the Court, and are carried about therewith, in a
 “ servile manner. For (as Tacitus saith of Claudius)
 “ there is no safety with that Prince, into whose
 “ mind all things are conveyed, as it were by infu-
 “ sion and direction from others. And Comines
 “ saith very well, It is better to be servant to a Prince
 “ whose suspicions have no end, than to one whose
 “ credulity hath no measure.

After this, there follows in the next verse but one, another
 Admonition to Princes, v. 14. And then a double Ad-
 monition to private Parents, to take care of the good e-
 ducation of their Children; as the best way to make a
 Kingdom happy, and to prevent the increase of wicked-
 ness. About which he interposes an Observation between
 these two: in the explanation of all which verses, I
 have had some respect to the LXX. without any injury
 to our Translation.

[k] And so I have done in the next v. 18. where by visi-
 on or rather prophecy they understand ἐξηντῆς, an ex-
 pounder of the Laws of God to the people; which was
 the office of the Prophets: who had a great stroke also
 in the Government (as Melancthon observes) and by
 their counsels, when they were followed, made the King-
 dom flourishing. As Elisha for about 70 years govern-
 ed the counsels of their Kings in the greatest calamities;
 particularly in the siege of Samaria: After whose death
 the Kingdom indured not much above an 100 years,
 agitated by perpetual seditions. Thus Eisaiah, by his
 counsels, moderated the calamities of Judah for several
 years: after which followed the ruin of the Nation; in
 which notwithstanding, by the counsels of Jeremiah a
 good part of the people were saved. From such examples,
 saith he, we may gather, that when prophecy ceased,

the people were scattered (so he translates the word *Para*) because for want of wholesome Counsellours there follows in Empires strifes of ambition, and seditions, which all tend to utter ruin: yet the second part of this sentence, saith he, admonishes us, that a remnant should be safe in their dispersions, viz. such as kept the Divine Doctrine. For want of which God takes away mens instructors, when they are not obedient to wholesome precepts. So the LXX. translate this verse (minding the sence rather than the words) there is no expounder of the Law, to a wicked lawless Nation, &c. God strips them even of their teachers; as some translate the word *Para*, perish: which hath various significations, most of which I have expressed in the Paraphrase; because they all agree well enough to this place.

[1] There is an exposition of the next words, v. 19. which would be very natural, if the Wise man spoke onely of the commands of Masters to their Servants; which they pretend sometime not to hear, that they may not doe as they are bidden. But he speaks of their not amending the faults, of which they have been already told: which is not the quality of all servants; and therefore I have said a slave. Or else we must interpret it, as the LXX. do of οἰκίτης σκληρῆς, a stubborn, obstinate servant; whose heart is hardened against all words that can be spoken to him, good or bad.

[m] But I must make no more glosses, for fear of prolonging this Preface too much beyond its just bounds. And therefore I shall conclude it, with the Lord Bacon's observation upon v. 21. (where the LXX. have expressed but a little part of the sence) "that both Princes and
 " private Masters, should keep a mean in the dispensa-
 " tion of their grace and favour towards servants:
 " which mean is threefold. First, that Servants be
 " promoted by steps (or degrees) not by leaps. Second-
 " ly, that they be now and then accustomed to repul-
 " ses. Thirdly (which Machiavel well advises) that
 " they

"they have ever in their sight before them, something
 "whereunto they may further aspire. For unless
 "these courses be taken, in raising of Servants, Princes
 "shall instead of thankfull acknowledgments, and du-
 "tifull observance, be repaid with nothing but disdain
 "and contumacy. For from sudden promotion, arises
 "insolence; from constant attainment of their desire,
 "proceeds impatience of being denied; and there be-
 "ing nothing remaining that they can further wish, ala-
 "cricity and industry will cease.

1. **H**E that being often reprov'd,
 hardeneth his neck, shall
 suddenly be destroyed, and that
 without remedy.

from God, will not yield in the least, but absolutely refu-
 seth to be guided by them, and submit unto them; is in
 danger to fall, and that on a sudden, into utter and irre-
 pairable ruin. See Arg. [a].

2. When the righteous are in
 authority, the people rejoyce: but
 when the wicked beareth rule, the
 people mourn.

Kingdom is happy: but when an ungodly man rules, the
 wicked get into places of trust; and make the people mi-
 serably groan under their oppressions. See Arg. [b].

3. Whoso loveth wisdom, rejoy-
 ceth his father: but he that keep-
 eth company with harlots, spendeth
 his substance.

and his estate as intire as both, gives the greatest joy to
 his Father: As on the contrary, nothing can be a greater
 grief to him, than to see his Son so sottish, as to main-
 tain a company of harlots; whose covetousness being
 as unsatiable as their lust, devourerth all that he hath. See
 Arg. [c].

1. **H**E that having
 received fre-
 quent reproofs from
 good men, and
 perhaps corrections
 make vertuous men
 grow numerous,
 (XXVIII. 28.) a

3. A young man
 whose love of wis-
 dom and vertue, pre-
 serves his body as
 pure as his mind,

4. *The king by judgment stablisheth the land: but he that receiveth gifts, overthroweth it.*

Kingdom to a good estate, though it hath been before in great disorder: But he who, having no respect to equity and right, takes the most illegal courses to enrich himself, subverts it utterly; though it be never so well settled. See Arg. [c].

5. *A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet.*

He that sooths up his neighbour, by commending all that he doth, though never so directly against his interest, is so far from being his friend, as he imagines, that he is a traitour to him; and leads him unawares into such dangers, that when he finds himself perplexed in them, he will treat that flatterer as his greatest enemy. See Arg. [d].

6. *In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare: but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.*

A naughty man hath an heavy heart at last, when he finds himself undone by those very arts, whereby he thought to have ruin'd others: but pious men are always cheerfull, nay, full of joy; both to think that they are in safe and secure ways, and to see the evil doer caught in his own wickedness.

7. *The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.*

A righteous man, when he is in authority, not onely readily receives, and patiently weighs, the complaints of the poorest person; but is at the pains to study his cause, that he may fully understand it and doe him right, though he thereby incurr hatred to himself from the adverse party: but a wicked man will not attend unto it, or not use due care to be well instructed in it. See Arg. [e].

8. *Scornfull men bring a city into a snare: but wise men turn away wrath.*

There are no greater fools than scorners, who by laughing at all things serious, whether sacred or civil, put a Kingdom into combustion,

bustion, when it is disposed to be quiet; nay, turn things top-
sy-turvy, and indanger its utter ruin, unless good and cauti-
ous men prevent it; who by their piety, turn away the di-
vine vengeance; and by their prudence and other vertues,
divert the fury of men, which those scorners have raised.
See Arg. [f].

9. *If a wise man contendeth with
a foolish man, whether he rage or
laugh, there is no rest.*

9. Let a man be
never so wise, it is to
no purpose for him
to dispute or to enter

into any contest with an obstinate fool: for which way soe-
ver he deal with him, whether roughly or gently, whether
angrily, or pleasantly, there will be no end of the contro-
versie; but the fool will still have the last word; nay, it is
well if he do not either restlessly rage, or laugh one to scorn.
See Arg. [g].

10. *The blood-thirsty hate the
upright: but the just seek his soul,*

10. Men enormouf-
ly wicked who stick
not to kill those that

oppose their desires, above all others hate and would destroy
an upright Magistrate; whose integrity makes him courage-
ously endeavour to bring them to condign punishment: but
such a person, all vertuous men love the more heartily, and
labour to defend and preserve from their violence; or to re-
venge his death, if he should perish by them. *See Arg. [h].*

11. *A fool uttereth all his mind:
but a wise man keepeth it in till af-
terwards.*

11. A fool is so in-
considerately tran-
sporting by his passi-
on, or conceit of him-

self, that when he comes to treat of any business, he can
put no stop to his discourse; but runs on, till he hath pour-
ed out all that he thinks upon that Subject: but a wise man
represses the heat and forwardness of his spirit, that he may
pause and take time, to declare his mind, not altogether,
but by parcels. *See Arg. [h].*

12. *If a ruler hearken to lyes, all
his servants are wicked.*

12. A Prince who
hearkens to the false
suggestions of those,
pleases, or who easi-

ly believes, without any examination, all the stories and

accusations that are brought him against others; fills his whole Court with so many wicked men, that it is hard to find an honest Minister or Officer among them. See Arg. [1],

13. *The poor and the deceitfull man meet together: the LORD lightneth both their eyes.*

made up of several sorts of men: of poor, for instance, who are fain to borrow, and of rich who lend them money, and perhaps oppress them: but these would all agree well enough, when they meet together, if they would but consider, that there is one LORD who makes the Sun to shine equally on all; and who intends all should live happily, though in an unequal condition. See XXII. 2.

14. *The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.*

14. A King that administers justice equally to all his Subjects, and cannot be moved by the power or interest of the greatest persons to deny it to the meanest; but faithfully and sincerely sets himself to help the poor to their right, or to defend them from violence and wrong; takes the surest course to settle himself in the affections of his people, and continue his Kingdom for many generations.

15. *The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself, bringeth his mother to shame.*

15. The way to make a Child wise and vertuous, is not onely to instruct him in his duty, but to check him when he is in fault; and that not merely by reproof, but by the sharp discipline of the rod, when the other will doe no good: for if he be left to follow his own will, or rather to wander after his own inclinations without such restraints, he will prove, in all likelihood, a disgrace to his mother, by whose indulgence he was spoiled; nay, fly perhaps in her face, and openly reproach her. X. 1.

16. *When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: but the righteous shall see their fall.*

16. When the wicked grow numerous, by growing great v. 2. men take the greater license to transgress; and wickedness increases by

by having authority on its side: but let not the righteous hereby be discouraged; for the wicked men are, the shorter is their reign; and they that preserve their vertue shall have the pleasure to behold their downfall.

17. *Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest: yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.*

correction or reproof; but let me advise thee to put thy self to this trouble, to save thy self a greater (*viz.* many anxious and restless thoughts, which his ill doing will raise in thee) or rather to give thy self the highest delight, when by thy care of his education, he proves a great ornament unto thee.

18. *Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.*

God unto them, they first grow idle and careless, and then run into all licentiousness; till, growing refractory and ungovernable, they be abandoned by God to destruction: but when they are not onely well taught, but also strictly observe the Laws of God, they remain in a prosperous and happy condition. See Arg. [k].

19. *A servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand, he will not answer.*

and perswasions; no, nor by reproofs, or threats: for, tho' he hear, and understood too, what you say, yet he will not obey, till he be forced unto it by blows. See Arg. [l].

20. *Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool, than of him.*

to speak to a business, before his betters, or before he understand it, or hath considered it, is so conceited of himself, that a man wholly ignorant, may sooner be rightly informed, than he who is so well perswaded of his own sufficiency,

17. It may seem most for thy ease to let thy Child alone, without giving him

18. Where there are none to instruct the people, and expound the will of

19. A Slave, and he that is of a servile nature, is not to be amended by reason

20. Observe it when you will, you shall commonly find that he who is forward

21. *He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become his son at the length.*

to expresse too much kindness to a Servant at the very first; by feeding him delicately, clothing him finely, or indulging him too much ease, liberty and familiarity: for this is the way to make him lawcy, if not contumacious; nay, to domineer and take upon him, as if he were a Son, and perhaps endeavour to disinherit the Heir of the Family. See Arg. [m].

22. *An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.*

quarrel about trifles: and, as he offends very often, so, if he let it proceed to rage and fury, he falls into abundance of sins; both in word and deed, against God, and against his neighbour.

23. *A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.*

them into the contempt and hatred of all; and at last into, destruction: but he whose meek and lowly mind makes him kind and obliging, shall be highly esteemed; and the esteem he hath shall be his support, when others fall to ruin.

24. *Whoso is partner with a thief, hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth it not.*

or by receiving stollen goods, &c, hath the same guilt upon him with the thief himself; and as he hath put his own life in danger to save the thief's, so this will engage him to run his soul into greater danger, to save his life: for being adjured to discover what he knows, he will go near to forswear himself; for fear of being hanged.

21. It is so hard for a man of base condition, to bear a sudden preferment handsomely, that it is dangerous

22. A man prone to anger is very troublesome, and unpeaceable; being apt to

23. Proud and contumelious behaviour instead of procuring men respect, throws

24. He that partakes with a thief, by harbouring him when he is pursued,

25. *The fear of man bringeth a snare; but whoſo putteth his truſt in the LORD, ſhall be ſafe.* 23. As all inordinate fear bereaves a man of counſel and power to help him-

ſelf; ſo he that ſtands in too great fear of what men can doe unto him, will be inſnared in many ſins, and perils alſo, to avoid their diſpleaſure: but he that confides in the Lord, hath his wits always about him, and, being raiſed above ſuch low conſiderations, preſerves his integrity; and that, by God's good providence over him, will preſerve him in ſafety.

26. *Many ſeek the ruler's favour, but every man's judgment cometh from the LORD.* 26. There are multitudes of men, who are ambitious to be known to their

Prince, and obtain his favour for honour and preferment; but few remember that there is a greater Lord than he, the Sovereign of all the world, whoſe grace and favour ſhould be principally ſought: for He determines and orders what every man's portion ſhall be; and will both judge of mens deſerts better than any earthly King can do; and deal with them according as they behave themſelves, in that condition wherein they are.

27. *An unjuſt man is an abomination to the juſt: and he that is upright in the way, is abomination to the wicked.* 27. There is ſuch a perfect antipathy between vertue and vice, that all truly good men extreme-

ly abominate him that doth miſchief in the world, though he be never ſo great and powerfull: as, on the contrary, the evil doer hath every man that behaves himſelf uprightly, though never ſo uſefull, in utter abhorrence and deteſtation.

The END of the THIRD PART.

C H A P. XXX.

A R G U M E N T.

[a] *This Chapter contains a new Collection of pithy Sayings; which some fanſie to be Solomon's: and therefore tranſlate the two firſt words, thus; the words of the Collector, or gatherer. But why Solomon ſhould call himſelf by this name, and alſo, inſtead of the Son of David, ſtyle himſelf the Son of Jake, ſeems to me unaccountable. And therefore it is moſt reaſonable to follow our Tranſlation (unto which the wiſeſt of thoſe that adhere to the Vulgar, are forced to conſent, as moſt literal) and to look upon this Chapter as a Fragment of ſome wiſe Sentences, delivered by one whoſe name was Agur, and his Father's name Jake: unleſs we will conceive that this Son of Jake (whoſoever he was) had gotten the name of Collector; becauſe, though he was a very wiſe man, yet he compoſed nothing himſelf: but onely gathered out of other wiſe mens works, ſuch inſtructions as he thought moſt profitable, and comprized, in a few words, a great deal of ſence.*

[b] *Which conjecture if it be admitted, nothing can better explain his diſclaiming the title of a Wiſe man (v. 2.) which he would not aſſume to himſelf, becauſe he was onely a Collector from other Authors, and did not pretend to have diſcovered or invented any thing himſelf.*

But take it how we will, ſome of his Obſervations are here annexed to the Proverbs of Solomon; after the manner of other Writings of this nature. In which (as Melancthon notes) the greater part of a Book belonging to one Author, ſome notable ſpeeches of others have been inſerted: as ſome of the Sibyllin Verſes, they ſay, were into the Poem of Phocyllides.

[c] *And*

[c] *And these words of Agur are called Massa, which we translate Prophecy, either to denote the weightiness of the Sentences; or that they were culled and selected out of some work of his, then remaining in their records, as fit (in the judgment of the men of Hezekiah, who perhaps extracted them) to accompany the Proverbs of Solomon. And they seem to me to be Answers to several Questions propounded to him by his Scholars, Ithiel (who was the principal) and Ucal: who came to him, as if he had been an Oracle, to be resolved in some hard doubts: asking him in the first place, just as they did Apollo of old (as Aben Ezra conjectures) Who was the wisest man? To which he replies, v. 2. He that is sensible of his own ignorance: much like the saying of Socrates, This onely I know, that I know nothing: and of Pythagoras, who also refused the name of Wise; which made much for the reputation of his wisdom.*

[d] *Upon this subject Agur enlarges, v. 3, 4. wishing his Scholars, especially Ithiel (who I suppose askt the question in the name of the rest) to be sensible how imperfect all humane knowledge is; by considering how little or nothing we know of the works of God, which none can understand (though they be perpetually before our eyes) but he alone that made them. And therefore advises him to make it his principal study, to understand what belonged to his own duty (which is the best part of knowledge) v. 5. and herein also to be content with what God hath revealed; and not pretend to be wiser than He hath made us, v. 6.*

[e] *After which, he gives Answers, as I take it, unto other questions, which Ithiel propounded to him. And first about Prayer. For Agur having repressed their busie humour of inquiry into all manner of things, had raised, we may suppose, some devotion in his Scholars hearts; which made them desire to be directed in it. And he gives them most wise advice, v. 7, 8. to be very cautious what they prayed for; just as in Plato (Alcibiad. 2.)*

we find Socrates giving Alcibiades instructions about this, as a principal part of virtue; in the practice of which, he tells him, there had need to be the greatest care, lest we imprudently ask those things that are not good for us. But he could not give Alcibiades such directions about this matter, as Agur here gives Ithiel and the rest of his Scholars. Whom he informs, that the true knowledge of God is the chiefest good; and therefore to be desired in the first place, above all other goods: and then (according to our Saviour's rule, in after-times) having first sought the things that belong to Religion, he directs them to beg of God moderate desires of all earthly things; believing that we are safer in a mediocrity, or middle estate, than either in fulness or in want. To which purpose Melancthon and others have gathered together many sayings out of other Writers. But none have given such reasons for this choice of a middle state, as this wise man, v. 9.

[f] After which, he seems to answer a question, which Ithiel propounded about moral virtue: which having been largely treated of by Solomon, he onely gives him one caution against hard-heartedness to Slaves and Servants; v. 10. of which the Hebrew Nation were generally very guilty, and thereby unmeet for that favour which they begg'd of God in their Prayers; which ought to have disposed them to be favourable unto others.

[g] And then he gives the character of four sorts of men, who are execrable unto God; and therefore ought to be avoided by all those that would be good, v. 11, 12, 13, 14. which I must pass by without any further account of them, but what I have given in the Paraphrase: because the fifteenth verse hath much difficulty in it, and therefore requires some time to be spent in opening it. Bochartus thinks to solve some of the difficulty by giving a new signification of the word Aluka. But all Interpreters, in a manner, taking it for that thick worm in waterish places, which we call an horse-leech, I do not think

think fit to forsake our Translation: nor to referr the beginning of the verse to that immediately foregoing (as some do, in this manner; detractors can no more leave off evil speaking, than the horse-leech leave off sucking, &c.) but rather to those words immediately following in this same verse; which, notwithstanding, I take to have some connexion with all the four foregoing, as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase. For it seems to me to be an Answer to some such Question as this (which the Disciples had propounded to their Master Agur, after the manner of ænigmatical discourses or riddles) what is most unsatiable? which he chuses to give an account of in this place; the better to represent the nature of those wicked men he had spoken of before: especially of the two last; the proud; and the tyrannical or extortioner; whose desires are a gulf, that can never be filled.

*And at the first he seems to have thought but of two things, viz. the grave and the barren womb; which might be called the daughters of the horse-leech, because they are so perfectly of the like nature, in regard of their unsatiableness. But he presently adds another; nay, a fourth came into his mind, as no less greedy: viz. the thirsty earth (which in those hot Countries sucks up all the rain as fast as it falls, though never so much) and the fire, which devours all the fuel that is laid upon it. And this he expresses after the manner of the Hebrews: who intending to mention four things or more, separate them at first, and begin with a lesser number; and proceed then to all that they designed. There are many examples of it in I. Amos 3, 5, 9, &c. and here in this Book of Proverbs, VI. 16. and below in this Chapter, v. 18, 21, &c. Indeed there is no example like this, where the sentence begins with two, and then says three, and then four: but that might be usual of which we have no exact example; and therefore I do not look upon this as a sufficient objection, against this way
of*

of explaining this verse. Which the LXX. hath taken, in the Roman Edition; which runs thus, the horse-leech hath three beloved daughters, and these three are never satisfied: and there is a fourth that saith not, it sufficeth.

There are those who compare certain vices, with these four unsatiable things, and not ineptly: the desire of revenge, to the grave; libidinous desires, to the barren womb; covetousness (or rather drunkenness) to the thirsty earth; and ambition to the devouring fire. And it is easie to shew, how fitly all these are resembled to the horse-leech: it being the vulgar saying, that harlots (for instance) are the horse-leeches of young men, sucking all their money from them, and exhausting their bodies too. And the Servant in Plautus, when he was about to rob the Chests of the two old men, says, jam ego me vortam in hirudinem, &c. now I will turn my self into a horse-leech, and suck out their very blood.

But I forbear such things, because there are others, more necessary to be added for the understanding the rest of the Chapter.

[h] *And that which next follows, v. 17. is a reflection upon the first generation of wicked men (mentioned, v. 11.) who sinned against the first Commandment of the second Table (as we speak) and for their rebellion against their Parents were adjudged to death by the Law of Moses, XXI. Exod. 15, 17. XX. Lev. 9. XXI. Deut. 18. And to make them more detestable, their carcases perhaps were thrown into some loathsome places, called the valley of carcases, or dead bodies (XXXI. Jer. 40.) and the valley of crows (as Bochartus conjectures) or ravens; whom the Wise man here speaks of. And besides this, they who abused their Parents, being of a villainous nature, were likely to turn Rogues; and to commit Robberies, Murthers, Treasons, or such like horrid crimes: which would bring them to the gallows (as we speak) or some such infamous death. The Jews indeed might*

might not suffer the body of one that was hang'd, after he had been put to death, to remain upon the gibbet, beyond the evening of that day, wherein he was executed. But they were not forbidden to let him lie unburied, in some polluted place, when he was taken down: And in some cases, we find, they did let dead bodies hang a long time, as we reade 2 Sam. XXI. And therefore Paulus Fagius (upon XX. Exod. 12.) expounds these words of Agur after this manner; disobedient children shall come to an ignominious death, and end their days by an halter, or other punishment; and so become crows meat. But there is no necessity of this explication. For we may conceive such a wicked person, to be drowned by the just judgment of God upon him; and his body to lie floating on the water; or to be cast on shore, where the ravens (who frequent the waters) come and pick out his eyes; at which they are observed to fly, sooner than any other part. He might perish also in other Countries, where the infamous punishment of the gibbet was in use; or be slain in battel; and left there to be a prey to beasts and birds. Among which the Raven is the rather mentioned, some think, because the young ones are so impious (as Vossius speaks, L. III. de Idol. Cap. 85.) as to fall upon the old ones and kill them, when they are hungry (which is affirmed by Ælian and others) and therefore more fitly employed to pick out the eyes of undutifull Children. But I look upon this as having more of fancy, than solidity in it: for others, for the quite contrary reason, make the Eagles here named, because they are a bird full of piety; as hath been observed out of Aben Ezra, by our learned Dr. Castell. whose discourse in his Speech (in Schol. Theol. p. 31.) I shall here set down for the explication of one word in this verse; wherein he differs from all others: which is יקרה. This word the Hebrews interpret doctrina, and understand the verse thus, the eye that despiseth the doctrine or the lesson of his mother, &c.

But

But there is no known root in their language from whence to derive this signification of it: and therefore that Doctor, out of the neighbouring languages, translates it rather senium, old age: which is most agreeable to the sense of the place. For that which is despised by the eye is some corporal defect (as crookedness, wrinkles, shaking of the head, &c. and such like things which attend old age) not any thing belonging to the mind. And besides, saith he, it better agrees with what follows of the Eagles young ones picking out such an eye: for they are observed to bear a regard to their ancients, and to have a kind of piety in them.

[i] In the next words, (v. 18, 19, 20.) he resolves another riddle, they put to him; which was this: what things are most obscure and unaccountable, though ordinary and common? of which I have given the best explication I could in the Paraphrase; but cannot further explain here, without making this Preface (which must necessarily be longer than ordinary, unless I should give no account of several things in the following verses which require explication) a great deal too much exceed the proportion which belongs to it.

[k] Next to these four inscrutable things, he subjoins four more, which are very grievous, or rather intolerable, because of their great indignity, v. 21, 22, 23. the two first belong to men, and the disturbance of the Commonwealth; the two last to women, and the disturbance of private Families. And there are reasons peculiar to each: ex gr. a Slave is intolerable when he gets the Scepter into his hand (as they have done sometimes) partly because such persons, being ill bred, generally have base principles; and are accustomed to vile things; and grow insolent by their good fortune: partly, because they are full of fears and suspicions, especially that they are despised and contemned; and therefore believing they are not loved, they will be feared, and care not what cruelties they exercise to keep men under.

Part

Part of which the Jews object to themselves in Schebet Judah; where they bring in a Philosopher laying this to their charge, that they affecting dominion in the City of Toledo, proceeded to such boldness and sauciness, that they would openly strike Christians: which fulfilled, saith he, that of Solomon XXX. 22.

[1] *The like might be said of the other three; but I shall only observe concerning the last, that there being another way of explaining it, besides that which is most obvious, I have not omitted it: because the LXX. go that way, who thus render it, When a servant maid casts her mistress out of doors. And there is a third way, which I have not mentioned, because it is not so agreeable to the words; when the mistress is not expelled, but the maid also is taken to wife and preferred in the husband's love; as N. de Lyra takes it: examples of which we have in history, that have proved very fatal to families. But this Preface, as I said, would be too long if I should name them; therefore I pass to the next.*

[m] *which seems to be an Answer to this Question, Quid est magnum in minimo? What is great in little? or rather in the least? v. 24, 25, 26, &c. where he teaches us several things: first not to admire merely bodily bulk, strength, or beauty; but rather wisdom, diligence and sagacity to understand and pursue our own interest: secondly, to admire the wisdom and power of God in the smallest things: and thirdly (as Melancthon adds) to reflect upon our own degenerate state, who neglect our own greatest good; nay, mind not self-preservation, but rather destroy our selves by vice and wickedness; and lastly, not to refuse admonition from the brutes. Among which, saith he, the Ants teach us industry, and forecast; the Rabbits not to attempt any thing above our strength; the Locusts, to preserve society by industry, and not to break it by sedition and disturbance of the publick order, and the Spider, to endeavour*

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to

to excell in some art or other. All of them teach us not to rely merely on strength, but to use counsel and prudence.

The first and second of which reflections I find in St. Chrysostom, who discourses admirably (Hom. XII. ad pop. Antioch. p. 139.) of the wonderfulness of the divine artifice, which in so small a body as that of the Ant, hath contrived such a perpetual desire of labour. To which if we attend, we cannot but receive this Instruction, *μη καταλαλιζέσθαι, μηδὲ ψεύγειν ἰδῶτα καὶ πόρος* not to affect softness and delicacy, nor fly from sweat and labours. And when the Wise man sends us, saith he, to learn of these little Creatures, he does just as we are wont to doe in Families; when the greater and the better sort have offended in any thing, we endeavour to shame them, by pointing to the little Children, saying, *βλέπε καὶ μικροτέρων σου πῶς ἐπισταύει καὶ διευγχεύει* behold, one that is a great deal less than thou, how towardly, how attentive and ready he is, to doe as he is bidden.

[n] But that word which we translate Conies, v. 26. (which are not so small a Creature, as Solomon here speaks of, nor make their holes in Rocks) Bochartus hath evidently proved signifies a Mouse in those Countries (whose hinder legs are longer than the forelegs) called by the Arabians in their language Aljarbuo; whose craft I have briefly expressed in the Paraphrase.

[o] In what is said of the Locusts also, v. 27. I have followed him: who observes, that to go forth, is a Scripture phrase for making war. In which the General was wont to divide the prey among the Souldiers, after a Victory: but the Locusts, having no settled constant Commander, divide among themselves. Yet I have not neglected our Translation.

[p] Which in the 28th verse hath forsaken the ancient Interpreters, who take *Sannath*, not for a Spider, but for a small sort of Lizzard; from its spots called *stellio*; which

which is accounted by all Authors a very crafty Creature: and to which the characters here given by Solomon do most properly belong. As the same Bochartus hath shewn at large L. IV. C. 7. de Sacr. Anim. Part 1. But if any have a life to understand hereby, some sort of Spider, they may reade Caelius Secundus his little Book called Araneus: In which he represents the wonderful wisdom of God, in the structure of this small Creature: together with its admirable agility, and cunning; both in weaving its webs and nets; and in hunting for its prey (particularly for young Lizzards) and in preserving it self; and its foresense of dangers, and of opportunities to catch its prey: For instance, against rainy weather; when other little Creatures grow dull in their motion and in their sight. In short, he observes, that as there is nothing, in appearance so mean, so abject, so small, in which the Creatour of all is not to be adored, and whose usefulness is not very great; so there are five things which are admirable in that sort of Spider, which he describes: the inexhausted matter which it spins out of so small a body; the wisdom of its contrivances; strength in fighting; knowledge of the future; and usefulness for medicine.

[pp] And from all these four, some have noted, that an abridgement may be made of all that is necessary for the conservation of a Kingdom in good estate: where first, care must be taken for provision of food, which we learn from the Pismire; then for secure and commodious dwelling, which we learn from the second sort of Creature; and then that there be concord and agreement among domesticks and citizens, which we learn from the third; and lastly that labour, industry and ingenuous arts be encouraged and advanced, which we learn from the fourth.

[q] After the consideration of these four little Creatures, of small strength and contemptible aspect, he places four other which are great, stately and undaunted, v. 29, 30, &c. In which there are two considerable difficulties;

one about that word in v. 31. which we translate a Greyhound (the vulgar a Cock; though Maldonate ingeniously conjectures the true reading in S. Hierom was Gallicus canis, which afterwards came to be corrupted into Gallus) but I take rather for a Horse (as our margin hath it) being a far braver, and more stately Creature than either of those; especially when he prances, and is managed by a good rider.

The other is about the last words of the same verse: which are the character he gives of a King (who perhaps is immediately placed after the He-goat; because that Creature in Scripture is an Emblem of Majesty VIII. Dan. 5. 21. XIV. Isa. 9. L. Jer. 8, &c) Alkum immo which Bochartus translates, against whom none of his Subjects ought to rise. For though many do; yet it is so contrary to their duty; and so dangerous, that he therefore calls him Alkum, against whom none arises. So Pallas was called by the Phœnicians, Ela Alkuma, the Goddess amongst whom none made insurrection. And the City in Bœotia that was sacred to her (she being reputed to be born there) was called Alalcomenas: for though it was small and built in a plain, yet it always remained untouched and inviolated, because out of reverence to the Goddess, *πάντες ἀπέχοντο μάχης* Bias, (as Strabo speaks) all men abstained from all force and violence to it. Thus he discourses in his Epist. quæ Resp. ad tres Quæst. p. 43. And I find he had said it before in his Phaleg Second Part, L. I. Cap. 16. where he translates melec Alcum, Rex invictus, an invincible King.

But there is another conjecture, of a very learned man of our own Mr. Pocock (Not. ad Gregor. Abul. Pharai. p. 203) which is so patt, that I could not omit it in my Paraphrase. For, according to the Arabick use of the word Alcum (out of which language both Rabbins and Christians take the liberty to expound the Hebrew words of the Bible, when they are singular) the sence is
still

still more pregnant; and sounds thus: A King with whom his people is, or whom his people follow. For as when there is such a happy agreement between King and people, there is nothing more comely; so then he appears with the greatest and most awfull Majesty, and strikes terror into all his enemies.

[r] *The two last verses, if we take them severed from the foregoing; are an advice how to be happy: which the whole Chapter shews in effect, is, to endeavour to be innocent. But because no man can be so wise, as never to doe a foolish thing; he seems, in conclusion, to tell what is next to that, viz. when we have miscarried any way, not to justifie it; but to appease those whom we have offended, by silence; taking shame to our selves, and not defending what we have done amiss, much less making complaints of others, &c. For (as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase, v. last) by insisting upon our innocence, or charging others, or exaggerating faults, very great mischiefs may insue.*

But these two verses may be connected with that which precedes; (though I have not been bold to doe it, because Interpreters go the other way) and v. 32. may be an advice to Subjects if they have offended their Prince any way, and been so foolish as to oppose him, not to persist in their error; much less defend it, and clamour upon the Government, &c. but sit down in silence, bewailing the guilt, and imploring a pardon. And then v. 33. may be look't upon as Advice to Princes, not to oppress their Subjects, and thereby provoke them to rebell against them.

The Vulgar Latin seems to referr both to Princes: for thus runs the sence of v. 32. according to that Translation (which I cannot indeed reconcile well with the Hebrew) It sometimes happens, that he who is advanced on high (to a throne suppose) appears to be a fool: who if he had understood (viz. his danger, or his folly, or what had been best for him) would have put his hand upon his mouth: that is, never have desired that dignity.

which perhaps he earnestly sought. And, though I know not how to justify this Translation, it agrees well with what follows (which may well be applied unto Princes) that it is great folly to strain things too far. Either the Laws, which if extended to the utmost rigour, will, by such hard construction, become the bane of humane society; or their taxes and exactions beyond what the people can bear. For by squeezing them too much, most dangerous seditions and rebellions have happened under excellent Princes.

And thus Melancthon understands the beginning of this verse (v. 32.) that Empires and Governments ought to be moderate; according to two excellent sayings of Plato and Solon; which he alledges: and then concludes that, anger also ought to be repressed (according to the admonition in the last words) lest publick discords arise, which draw after them vast ruins: and oft-times arise from light causes; which ought to have been mollified and cured by some moderation, and not exasperated into a flame.

1. **T**HE words of Agur the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal.

whose Works these weighty Sentences were collected, which he uttered like a propheticall Teacher, to Ithiel, one of his most eminent Scholars, and to Ucal, another of them; but especially to the former. See Arg. [a] [c].

2. Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.

Agur modestly and humbly said; Do not call me wise: for I am far from that acuteness, which is natural to him who excels in wisdom, that I am stupid, in comparison with such a person; nay, I cannot arrogate to my self the understanding of a common man. See Arg. [b] [c].

1. **H**ERE now follow some memorable Sayings, of Agur, who was the Son of Jacche; out of

whose Works these weighty Sentences were collected, which he uttered like a propheticall Teacher, to Ithiel, one of his most eminent Scholars, and to Ucal, another of them; but especially to the former. See Arg. [a] [c].

2. Who admiring his Wisdom, and desiring to be resolved in many difficulties,

3. *I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.*

3. And as for improvements, which are made by the help

of knowing persons I have not had the advantages of many other men: for I was never brought up in the Schools of the Prophets, where I might have learnt some wisdom; much less have I received the knowledge of such sacred mysteries, as thou inquirest after; the most I can pretend unto, is onely to know what belongs to a pious life. See Arg. [d].

4. *who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell.*

4. But had I a greater reach, or been better bred, it would have been impossible for me, to give an account of the works of God; much less of God himself. For where is he among all the Wise men,

that ever went up into Heaven and came down again, to tell us the order, and the motion of the Stars; and all the rest that is done there? Nay, who is it, that can so much as give us the least account of the Wind, but God alone? who hath it perfectly in his power, to make it cease, and blow again, as He pleaseth. And, to come lower yet, who but He hath tyed up the Waves of the Sea, that they should not exceed their bounds? or who hath fixed the Earth (on which thou dwellest, and therefore art better acquainted withall) within such limits, as it never breaks? By what name is he called, that can explain these things? or, if thou knowest, tell me the name of his Son, or of his Family; that, if he be dead, we may enquire of them.

5. *Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.*

5. The most that any man can doe for thy satisfaction, is this; to send thee to

the Book of God, and bid thee be content with what He hath there revealed of Himself, and of his Will; which in every part of it is so sincere, and free from all mixture of deceit, that thou mayest safely rely upon it;

and take his word, that He will protect and defend all those, who, in obedience to his commands, trust Him for what he hath promised.

6. *Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.*

Will, than really thou hast; by adding any thing of thy own to God's word, and vouching it for his: which may bring thee into great danger of the severest punishments from Him; for being guilty of the worst of forgeries, in counterfeiting divine inspiration.

7. *Two things have I required of thee, deny me them not before I die.*

thou shouldst ask of God) I have not much to say neither; for I would not have thee multiply words, but say, as I am wont to do: I humbly beg onely two things of Thee, O God; which I most earnestly beseech Thee I may not want, as long as I stay in this world.

8. *Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me:*

opinions, especially concerning Thee and Religion; and from being any ways guilty of deceiving other men: and then, for the supply of my bodily necessities, I desire Thou wouldst neither give me scarcity, nor superfluity; but, if I may chuse, a middle between both: making me such a competent allowance as may be sufficient to maintain me decently, in that state and condition of life, wherein Thou hast placed me. See Arg. [e].

9. *Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.*

tempt me to be so prophane and irreligious, as not onely to forget the donour of all good things, but atheistically to

6. Let this suffice thee; and do not pretend to greater acquaintance with his

7. And in Answer to the Question about Prayer (what things

8. The first is for my mind; that I may be perfectly secured from being deceived my self by false

9. For I am sensible how great danger there is, either in having abundance of wealth, which may
contemn

contemn thy worship and service; nay, insolently profess, that I know no such being as the LORD, nor have any thing to do with Him: or in a beggarly condition, which may press me, first to be injurious unto others for my own relief; and then to run into the fearfull crime of perjury, to purge my self from the charge of theft. XXII. *Exod.* 8, 11.

10. *Accuse not a servant unto his master lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.*

10. As for rules of behaviour towards others, they are generally well known;

and therefore I onely admonish thee to avoid one thing (to which our Nation is too prone) that is, not to abuse any poor Slave, whose condition is wretched enough; and therefore, for instance, rather excuse than aggravate his fault to his Master, who perhaps is too rigorous: and be sure never to load him with unjust accusations, lest, being wronged by thee, and not knowing how to right himself, he appeal to the Lord and pray Him to punish thee; and thou, being found guilty, feel the heavy effects of his vengeance. *See Arg.* [f].

11. *There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.*

11. And now, to answer your inquiry, *what company you should keep?* There

are four sorts of men, I would have you set a mark upon and cautiously shun. *First*, they that are foully ungratefull to them, from whom they have received many benefits: for such a sort of men there is, who have no sense of obligations, no, not to their Parents, to whom they have the greatest; but rail upon their Father, nay, wish him dead; and cannot speak a good word of their Mother.

12. *There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.*

12. Next to these, are a sort of hypocrites; who have a great opinion of their

own purity, and would be thought by others very vertuous: but hide the greatest filthiness, both in their minds and lives (which either they do not see, or will not take care to purge away) under this outward garb of holiness.

13. *There*

12. There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eye-lids are lifted up.

very countenance; and makes them superciliously overlook all other men, as if they were not worthy of the least respect from them.

14. There is a generation whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw-teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.

or Wolf, that hath teeth, both small and great, as sharp as swords or knives, coming with open mouth to devour every Creature, that is weaker than themselves: such is the savage oppression of tyrants, extortioners, calumniators, &c. who have no mercy upon the poor and needy; but make their condition (which moves compassion in other men) so insufferable, that they are weary of living any longer in the world.

15. The horse-leech hath two daughters, crying, Give, give. There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things say not, It is enough:

leech; which sucks the blood of other Creatures, till it burst: as those wicked men do the livelihood of the poor, till they ruin themselves. And in this perpetual craving more and more, without any end, there are two things so like the Horse-leech, that they may be called her Daughters: nay, there are three that are never satisfied; or rather four whose desires cannot be filled. See Arg. [g].

16. The grave, and the barren womb, the earth that is not filled with water, and the fire that saith not, It is enough.

greedily swallow up and consume all that are yet to come :
the

13. There is a third sort, whose pride and arrogance is so lofty, that it appears in their

14. But the fourth and last sort is most mischievous, whose ravenous cruelty hath no example; unless you conceive a Lion

15. And here I will satisfy one of your other Questions, What Creature is most unsatiable? I answer, the Horse-

16. They are these: Death, or the Grave; which having consumed so many past Generations, will as

the *barren Womb*; which is wont to be desirous of Children beyond measure: *the Earth*, which drinks up all the rain that falls upon it, and still thirsts for more: and *the Fire*, which devours all the fuel that is thrown into it, and never ceases to burn, as long as there is any thing to feed it.

17. *The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.*

are foungratefull to their Parents, as not onely to disobey their commands, but to scorn, nay, and deride their persons; and mock at the infirmities of their old age: whose villanies shall bring them to an infamous end, and expose their dead bodies for a prey to the Ravens (which frequent the Brooks, that run in the Vallies) and to the young Eagles; who shall pick out those eyes, in which their scorn and derision of their Parents, was wont to appear. See Arg. [h].

18. *There be three things which are two wonderfull for me, yea, four which I know not:*

motions are beyond my reach: nay, a fourth, which is the most unaccountable of all the rest. See Arg. [i].

19. *The way of an eagle in the air, the way of a serpent upon a rock, the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a man with a maid.*

of a Serpent's speedy creeping, without any feet, to the top of a slippery rock: *thirdly*, the way that a Ship makes in the Sea, though it seem sometime to sink to the bottom of the water, and again to mount up into the air: But, above all, the slipperiness of youth (which is more inconstant than the air, &c.) and especially the impatience, and restless tossing of a young man's mind, his cunning and sleights, when he goes a wooing; and the wonderfull arts

17. I will not end this, till I have pronounced the doom of the first sort of wicked men, now mentioned (v. 11.) who

18. To your next Question, my Answer is; that there are three things, whose

19. *First*, the wonderfull swiftness of an Eagle's flight into the air, quite out of our sight (XXIII. 5.) *secondly*, the manner

he

he hath to slide into the heart of a maid, and win her love.

20. *Such is the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.*

20. And yet, the subtilty of an adulterous woman, is equal to this; both in crafty contrivances of

secret ways to enjoy her filthy pleasures; and in casting a mist before her Husband's eyes to conceal them, when she is in danger to be discovered. For having defiled his Bed, she not only looks modestly and demurely, but professes the greatest innocency; and behaves her self, as if she were the honestest Woman, and the kindest Wife too in the world: like one, that having eaten some forbidden meat, wipes her mouth, and says she has not so much as tasted it; but abhors to let it come within her lips.

21. *For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it cannot bear:*

21. And to satisfy your other Question, *What things are most intolerable?* my answer is;

that three things make such a disturbance, that men groan under the load of them: nay, there are four, which are an unsupportable grievance unto those that are oppressed by them. See Arg. [k].

22. *For a servant when he reigneth, and a fool when he is filled with meat,*

22. *First*, the insolent cruelty of a vile Slave, when he is advanced to a

Throne: *secondly*, the petulant rudeness of a fortunate fool; especially when he grows debauched, and is in one of his drunken fits:

23. *For an odious woman when she is married, and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.*

23. And *thirdly*, a woman, whose moroseness, pride and passion (and such like

ill qualities) make her hated by every body; when she gets an Husband: and *lastly*, a poor maid servant, when she is puffed up by an estate, left her by her mistress; or, which is worse, that having supplanted her mistress, and thrust her, first out of her husband's affections, and then out of doors, succeeds in her place, and becomes his wife. See Arg. [l].

24. *There*

24. *There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise :*

that are very contemptible, but much admired : for though they have no bodily bulk, their wisdom is exceeding great, and very elaborae. See Arg. [m] [pp].

25. *The ants are a people not strong ; yet they prepare their meat in the summer ;*

multitudes of them, and yet so provident, as well as industrious, that they prepare granaries under ground, with wonderfull art, to receive their food : which they gather and lay up in harvest time ; and secure it too, that it may serve for all the year. See VI. 8.

26. *The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks ;*

have a Leader to give them notice of any danger ; and are so cunning that they provide for their safety in high rocks : into which they have several entrances and out-lets ; that if they be assaulted in one port, they may escape at another. See Arg. [n].

27. *The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands ;*

former, that they have no King to govern them : yet go forth, like Soldiers to battle, in good order : and when they fall upon the spoil, divide it among themselves, without any quarrel or contention. See Arg. [o].

28. *The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings palaces.*

The little spotted Lizzard, which takes fast hold even on the flat ceiling of houses ; and there goes (with its body hanging down into the air) in pursuit of its prey : which as it nimbly catches ; so it intrudes it self to hunt for it, even in Kings Palaces. See Arg. [p].

24. To those four intolerable things, of which all complain, I will add four more,

25. First, the Ants : which are a creature so infirm, that one crush of our foot kills

26. Secondly, the mountain Mice, are a feeble sort of creatures also, but they

27. Next the Locusts, which herein indeed differ from the

28. Lastly, (The Spider, which weaves a curious web, or rather)

29. *There be three things which go well, yea, four are comely in going :*

fit to answer your last Question, *What things are most stately?* and there are three, or rather four things, whose motion is majestick, and go after a goodly manner.

30. *A lion which is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any,*

heroical and undaunted of all creatures; never turning his back for fear of the greatest multitude of hunters, or Dogs that set upon him.

31. *A grey-bound, an he-goat also, and a king, against whom there is no rising up.*

equipped (as we speak) for the battle: And then the *He-goat* with his long beard: when he walks in pompous state before the flock. And *lastly*, a prosperous *King*, of invincible courage; especially when he reigns in the hearts of his people, and marches at the head of an unanimous, victorious Army; whom none dare rise up to oppose. *See Arg. [q].*

32. *If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thy self, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth.*

32. If thy pride or thy passion hath engaged thee, in some foolish action, whereby thou hast disgraced thy self; or made thee contrive and endeavour any thing that is unwarrantable; do not add one fault to another, by excusing it, or blaming any body but thy self for it; much less by quarrelling at those that admonish thee of it, and reprehend thee for it: but stop at the first motion to this, and silently acknowledge thy error. *See Arg. [r].*

33. *Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood: so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.*

33. For from little things there is an easy progress unto greater. And just as you see Milk is first pressed out

out of the Cows udder, and then being shaken in the churri
is forced into butter; and as the Nose being wrung, though
at the first it onely purge it self, yet if it be harder pressed,
there comes out blood: even so, words passing to and fro,
raise an heat, and that if continued, stirs up anger; and
that, making men vehemently insist upon their opinion,
or their desire, turns into scolding; and that, in the issue,
grows up to quarrels, and irreconcilable enmities.

C H A P. XXXI.

A R G U M E N T.

[a] *It is generally taken for granted, both by Hebrew and Christian Writers, that King Lemuel, whose Mother gave him the Precepts contained in this Chapter, was Solomon; whom Bathsheba took care early to instruct in his duty; being, as some of no small name fancy, divinely inspired with the gift of Prophecy. But, as all this depends merely upon conjecture, and that without the least ground, so there is no good reason assigned why Solomon should here be called Lemuel; and not by the name he hath both in the beginning of the Preface to this Book, I. Prov. 1. and in the entrance of the First Part Chap. X. 1. and of the last Collection also (XXV. 1.) made by the men of Hezekiah: whom Grotius fancies to be the King here mentioned, under the name of Lemuel; onely for this reason, that this Chapter follows the Collection of Proverbs made by his Servants: which hath no force at all in it; for the words of Agur follow more immediately; which he cannot ascribe to Hezekiah.*

And therefore it is more reasonable to conceive this Lemuel to have been a Prince in some other Country; who had gathered some weighty Sentences taught him by his Mother (whose name is unknown) which it was thought fit to
adjoyn

adjoyn to the foregoing: because they are very wise, and of great moment; as if they proceeded from a propheticall spirit. And it is onely the vanity of the Jewish Nation, who would inclose all wisdom within the bounds of their own Country, which hath made them ascribe that which follows in this Chapter to Solomon and Bathsheba. For which, as I said, there is no colour: but it appears by the History of the Queen of Sheba, and the Embassies which came from the Kings thereabouts, who sent to hear the wisdom of Solomon (1 King. IV. ult.) that there were even in those times, great persons very inquisitive after knowledge, as there had been, in the times foregoing, in those Eastern Countries, and in Egypt; which was famous for wise men, 1 King. IV. 30. where we reade of the wisdom of the Children of the East (i. e. Arabia where Job a considerable Prince, and the rest of his Friends, lived in former ages) and the wisdom of Egypt. Of which Country some have thought those famous men to have been, who are mentioned in the next words, v. 31. where this demonstration is given that Solomon's wisdom excelled all the wisdom of those Countries, for he was wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, &c. upon which words, Gasper Sanchez notes, that the Sedar Olam says, these were Egyptian wise men. But it is not good to take things upon trust; for I find upon examination of the place (which is Chap. XX. of the greater Book of that name) that it saith no such thing, but onely this, that the Sons of Zara, Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol and Darda (mentioned 1 Chron. II, 6.) were Prophets; who prophesied in Egypt. But however this be, that very Book acknowledges in the next Chapter; that there were Prophets in other Countries, before the Law of Moses was given: though after the delivery of it, the holy Spirt, they forsake, forsook all the world but them; immediately upon the speaking of those words, XXXIII. Exod. 16. XXXIV. 6. For which assertion,

as

as there is not the least shadow of reason, so supposing it were true, it must notwithstanding be confessed that there remained still among other Nations, many excellent and wise persons both men and women: who had such communication also with the Jews, that many of them were proselyted to their Religion: which might have countenanced their Authors if they had said (and it seems to me a better fancy than any they have) that Lemuel's Mother was a Jewish Lady married to some Prince of another Country; by whom she had this Son; and took care of his Institution in the Divine wisdom of her people. And by the use of the word *bar* three times, for a Son, in the beginning of this Instruction (which is no where used in this Book before, nor in the whole Bible more than once, II. Psal. 12.) one would guess this Lemuel to have been some great person in Chaldaea. For in the next verse also (v. 4.) we meet with the word *Melachin* (Kings) according to the termination in the Language of that Country.

[b] But this is all uncertain, and therefore I proceed no further in it: but onely note, that whosoever was the Mother of Lemuel, she was mightily solicitous to have him doe well: as appears by verse the second. Which some think to be a passionate expression, when she saw him begin to incline to evil courses; as if she had said: What dost thou mean, my Son, &c. But it is more likely, that it proceeded from a tender concern for his well-doing, as soon as ever he grew up; whilst he was yet innocent and untainted. And that he might so continue, she gives him three or rather four of the most proper Advices, that could be thought of for a Prince.

[c] First, to subdue that lust, which she knew to be very violent in youth; especially in young Kings; who have more provocations, and are apt to take more license than other men: but bring thereby such mischiefs upon themselves, and their Kingdoms, as are not to be repaired; but often end in their destruction, v. 3.

A a

[d] In

[d] In order to this, she admonishes him, in the second place, to avoid drunkenness; and to preserve himself perfectly sober: whereby he would be fit also for counsel; and be able likewise to give a right judgment, when Causes were brought before him, v. 4. which some extend so far, as to think she would not have him drink any wine at all, or other strong liquors, (of which there were several made, of honey, or dates, and divers other things; which go under the common name of Schiechar) But it is more reasonable to look upon it, as a caution against excess: which is dangerous in all men, but especially in those that are to govern others, as well as themselves. For then they blurt out the greatest secrets, as the Vulgar translate the latter part of the verse; or grow furious and outrageous, as the LXX. translate the same passage: but both of them without any ground that I can see in the Hebrew Text.

[e] In which follows, v. 5. the true reason of this prohibition; and then an account (v. 6.) of their condition, to whom a larger quantity than ordinary, of wine or strong drink, is fit to be allowed. Not to Kings, who have innumerable ways to relieve their cares, and to divert themselves when any thing troubles them: but to poor miserable people, that are ready to faint under their heavy burthens and oppressions. For whom this is a present relief; and the onely one sometime they are capable of; when they are in a very melancholy condition. And they that are of such a temper, or are otherways made exceeding sad, can better bear a great deal of wine, without any disorder, than the sanguine, and they who are gay and merry. There are those, that by men ready to perish, have understood such as were condemned to die, and going to execution. Unto whom it was the custom to give a draught of wine, to support their spirits; and in the degenerate ages of the Jewish Commonwealth, they put something into it to intoxicate the poor wretches, so that they might be insensible of pain.

And

And some imagine this custom took its original from this place in the Proverbs; though it be not the true sence of the words. For the latter part of this verse, (and that which follows, v. 7.) gives the best explication of the first: and they shew he speaks of those that were miserably poor. And so the best Hebrew Expositours interpret those words, XXVI. Deut. 4. my Father was a Syrian, ready to perish: that is, extreme poor; and in want of all things.

[f] *And thus having enlarged this second Advice a little, she passes to the third: which is (v. 8.) to take such care that Justice be exactly administred (without which no Kingdom can subsist) as himself to undertake the defence of those, who were in danger to lose a good cause; for want of an Advocate to plead it for them, or to open the true state of it, &c. Especially she commends to him, the patronage of Strangers, Orphans, and poor indigent people. The first of which in the Hebrew, are called children of change; or that are passed by: That is, persons who have changed their country; or that are in danger to suffer grievous alterations in their condition, if right be not done them; or who are deserted by all, and have none to stand by them. Several other ways there are to explain the phrase; but to the same purpose.*

[g] *But the great care of Parents, being to see their Son well married, she concludes with the description of such a wife, as she would have him seek: which takes up the rest of the Chapter, from v. 10 to the end. And it is in the form of a Poem (as S. Hierom takes it) consisting of a sort of Iambick verses: each of which begins with a new Letter of the Alphabet in order; the tenth with Aleph, the eleventh with Beth, and so to the bottom. Which was an elegant sort of composure among the Ancients, and a help to memory also; as we see in several Psalms, and other parts of Scripture.*

Now whether she composed these verses her self, or got her sense expressed by some eminent Poet, cannot be known; nor is it material. But I do not think fit to follow the conjecture of Huetius (in his late Demonstr. Evang.) who imagines the words of Lemuel's Mother to end with the ninth verse: and here to begin a distinct composition of some other person: suppose Solomon. For though this following Poem, be disjoyned from the foregoing words, in the LXX; and differs herein from the rest that in the beginning of every verse, the order of the Hebrew Alphabet is observed: yet there being no words in the head of it (as there is Chap. XXX. and the beginning of this Chapter) to denote it to belong to another Author, I take it to be of the same piece with the first nine verses. That is, to be a Copy of Verses, delivered to Lemuel by his Mother, in commendation of an excellent woman: which perhaps she did not make her self (though there be no proof of that, and both Deborah and Hannah we find were Poets) but, notwithstanding, being recommended to him by her; would, she thought, have the same authority with him, as if she had been the Author. And it is very observable, that the general character of such a woman as she would have him marry, is *escheth chajil*, a vertuous woman, we translate it. Which word *chajil*, signifies both strength (or rather valour and courage) and riches and vertue. And, in the description of fitting persons for the Magistracy, Jethro in general saith, they should be *anschee chajil* (XVIII. Exod. 21.) which we translate able men: and then follows more particularly wherein their ability should consist, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness. I take therefore *escheth chajil* to include in it a great fear of God (mentioned afterward v. 30.) which is so powerfull as to endue one with the courage to doe well, when piety is contemned; nay, laught at and abused: and have not therefore omitted this, among other words, to express the force of this phrase.

[h] And

[h] *And then follow, after this, abundance of other good qualities, which are included in this: such as chastity; and such a care of her husband's estate, that he might have a perfect confidence in her management; love to him without moroseness: diligence in all household affairs: frugality; gentleness in the government of her family; a prudent care in the education of her children; and in setting all the family to some employment or other; and increasing also her husband's estate, and yet giving liberally to the poor; affability, and courtesie to all, &c. which excellent indowments if her Son found in a wife, she knew it would be a certain means to preserve him, from following other women (v. 3.) when he took perfect delight in her company: and from drunkenness also (v. 4.) which few fall into, who intirely love their wives, and study to please them in all things: for they generally abhor this loathsome vice. In order to this she would have him marry such an one, as he could perfectly confide in; and never in the least suspect of any levity, or unfaithfulness, or carelesness, when he was abroad, v. 11. and would never be cross to him; but always loving, and kind, and pleasing, when he was at home, v. 12.*

[i] *An excellent housewife also; prone to take any pains her self, that she might give a good example to others: particularly, in the Linen, and Woollen Manufacture; in which the greatest women, it appears by ancient Authors, constantly employed themselves heretofore, with such diligence, as is highly praised in their Books v. 13. where to express her propension to this work, he ascribes a willingness and forwardness to her hands; just as XXI. Prov. 25. he makes the hands of the sluggard to be averse to labour.*

[k] *Which turns to a great account, she shews, both in foreign commodities, v. 14. and in the purchase of land, v. 16. which the good housewife her self views, and walks about with great expedition (v. 17.) tucking up*

her garments (as we speak) that she may be fit for motion every where: and not minding fine clothes more than her business, nor for fear of spoiling them, neglecting that; but preferring strength in her arms acquired by labour, before the ornaments wherewith they are wont to be adorned.

- [1] The profit of which she finds is so great, that it makes her love labour better than sleep; and when there is haste of work, to continue it all night: so v. 18. may be expounded.

After which follows v. 19. another instance of her bumble greatness. Then her charity to the poor, v. 20. her care of her own family, v. 21. where the last word having different senses, I have expressed them all in the Paraphrase.

- [m] And then is wisely mentioned, v. 22. her magnificence in the hanging of her house, and of her bed, and in her own apparel: which was the more allowable, when the poor were not neglected; and the decking her self and house, did not make her forget their necessities. The particular words there I have not room to explain. Nor those which follow, v. 24. (after she had mentioned the honour her husband would get by such a wife, v. 23.) for I think it is needfull rather to give a brief account of v. 25.

- [n] Which seems not unfitly translated by Castalio to this sense, that she being thus amply provided, and fortified, as it were, against all accidents; need not fear any want in future times. But considering what follows, v. 26, 27. I have chosen onely to touch on that sense; and to take strength and honour for the excellent qualities belonging to her: which I have called her principal ornaments; because the Hebrews are wont to express that which adorns any person, and is most proper to them, by the name of clothing: as CXXXII. Psal. 9. thy Priests shall be clothed with righteousness.

[o] *The rest I must wholly omit, and onely observe, that the fear of the LORD in the conclusion (v. 30.) is the foundation of all these vertues (which will either not be found, where there is no devout sence of God; or not be constant and equal, but vary as several passions govern and rule their spirits) especially when it is in such a high degree, that a woman values her self for the fear of the Lord, more than any thing else. So the LXX. translate it; A prudent woman is commended; but she praises the fear of the Lord: which may have this sence also, that her vertues commend Religion unto others. Religion it self is honoured by her excellent vertues: which are so exemplary, that they make others in love with them, as well as with her.*

I conclude all with the Observation of Melancthon, that this Description, which he calls Speculum honestæ Matronæ, is altogether simple and plain, without any such allegories as Simonides used, who said, He was happy that married a wife like a Bee: and that all this, in a manner, is comprehended by the Apostle in those words to 1 Timothy II. ult. she shall be saved in Child bearing, if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety. Faith, saith he, is the acknowledgment of the true God, and confidence in his Son Jesus Christ (that is, belief of the whole Gospel) out of which springs the love of God, and from thence the love of her Husband and Children: and then holiness or sanctification, which is that vertue we call chastity: and lastly temperance, as he translates it, moderation in meat and drink; or rather, all manner of sober behaviour, and prudence, in the Government of the family, and in the moderation of all sorts of expences, &c. which things the Apostle particularly mentions; because in the enumeration of Vertues, it is the manner of the holy Writers, to name those onely, which are most proper and suitable to every ones state and vocation.

1. **T**HE words of king Lemuel,
the prophecy that his mother taught him.

considered: which are weighty Sentences also (XXX. 1.) which his Mother taught him, with such authority, as if she had been a Prophetess. See Arg. [a].

2. *What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?*

2. And with no less tenderness and affection also, saying; Hearken, my Dear Son, for whose well-doing, O how much am I concerned? I want words to express the care I have about it: I am at a loss how to instruct thee according to my wishes: what shall I desire thee to do for my sake, who indured so much for thee; when I carried thee in my womb, and brought thee forth from thence? what shall I pray thee to do? for whom I have made so many prayers to God; and vows too, if I might but see thee come safe into the world, and grow to be a man, and sit upon a Throne. See Arg. [b].

3. *Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.*

3. In the first place, let me prevail with thee, as thou lovest me, and as thou lovest thy self, to be chaste in thy desires of bodily pleasures, and not to give up thy self to follow thy lust after women; which will destroy the strength of thy body, weaken thy mind, and exhaust thy treasures: that is, engage thee in such courses as are the bane of Kings; and, by making them neglect their Government, have brought many of them and their Kingdoms to utter ruin. See Arg. [c].

4. *It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes strong drink:*

4. And next to this, O Lemuel, Kings of all other men, Kings, I say, should be sparing, very sparing in the use of wine, and of all other intoxicating drink: and so should their Counsellors,

fellors, and Commanders of Armies, and Judges, and all other Ministers and Officers. *See Arg. [d].*

5. *Left they drink and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.*

5. For they may injure more than themselves, when they are in drink. If

a Cause, for instance, be brought before a Prince or a Judge, and his thoughts are confused by the fumes of wine; he may quite forget the standing Rules whereby he ought to determine it: and things appearing to him quite otherwise than they are, he may not onely judge amiss, but unjustly condemn those that ought to have been acquitted; and undoe poor and afflicted people, by giving away their right, when the comfort of their whole life depends upon his justice.

6. *Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of heavy hearts.*

6. If the liberal use of wine and strong drink, is to be indulg'd to any body,

it is to those miserable wretches, and the meaner sort of persons: whom it may be charity to comfort therewith, when they are in danger to perish, for want of the necessary supports of life; or are oppressed with grief and sorrow in any other deplorable condition. *See Arg. [e].*

7. *Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.*

7. Then bring forth plenty of wine, and set it before such a disconsolate person:

let him drink freely till he hath cheered his heart, and raised his drooping spirits, and be able to think of something else, beside his poverty and misery; nay, till he be so merry, as quite to forget the cares and wearisome labours, that it brings upon him.

8. *Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.*

8. And that's the third thing I beg of thee, to administer justice exactly to

all thy Subjects, and not merely commit the care of it unto others: but sit thy self upon the bench; and if thou seest a man in danger to lose his right, because he is not able to make it out, and through fear, or ignorance,

rance, or want of elocution, cannot speak for himself, keep not silence, but undertake his defence; especially if it be the cause of strangers, who understand not the Laws, and perhaps are in danger to suffer some great damage, in their bodies, credits, or estates. See Arg. [f].

9. *Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.*

9. And when thou hast cleared the righteousness of their cause, fear not to pronounce the sentence boldly, according as the Laws require: Let no man persuade thee to admit of delays, but bring the business to a speedy issue; that he who is poor, nay, a mere beggar, may neither be oppressed by doing him injustice, or by deferring to do him right.

10. ¶ *Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.*

10. ¶ And now, next to this, I shall commend a good wife unto thee: In the choice of whom, a singular care ought to be employed. But alas! such a woman as I would have is scarce, and hard to be found. One that is not onely industrious, but pious, and can command her self, as well as govern her family: being inrich with all those virtuous qualities, which make her far more valuable, than all the pearls or precious stones, that women love to be adorned withall. See Arg. [g].

11. *The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.*

11. I can onely give the character of her (which may serve to direct others as well as thee, in their search after such a person) in whose chastity, as well as prudence, frugality, and fidelity in ordering all affairs at home, her Husband hath such a confidence, that he may go abroad, and attend the publick affairs; without the least care or solicitude what will become of his domestick concerns; and not be tempted to inrich himself, or supply his own necessities, with the spoil of other men. See Arg. [h].

12. *She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.*

12. She will not onely endeavour to answer his love, with an

an equal affection, but to provoke and excite it, by pleasing him in every thing; and avoiding whatsoever is ungratefull to him: nay, by deserving well of him, and studying to promote the interest of him and of his family, and to maintain his honour and reputation; and that not onely by fits and in a good humour, but all the days of her life; even after he is dead, if she survive him. *See Arg. [b].*

13. *She seeketh wooll, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.*

in some piece of good houswifery: but of her own accord sets up a Linen and Woollen Manufacture; to which she applies her own hands so willingly, as well as dextrously, that it appears she delights in the work. *See Arg. [c].*

14. *She is like the merchants ships, she bringeth her food from a-far.*

as gainfull a traffick for foreign commodities (which she gets in exchange for these) as if her husband set out a Fleet of Merchant Ships; to fetch them from far distant Countries.

15. *She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.*

make provision for those that are to go abroad to work in the fields; and to set her maidens their several tasks at home.

16. *She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.*

ment she continually increases it: first purchasing a field for corn, when she meets with one that she judges worth her money; and then, out of the mere product of her own labours, adding a vineyard to it, which she causes to be well planted.

13. Idleness is so hatefull to her, that she need not be desired to employ her self

14. And therewith she maintains her family without expence, by carrying on

15. Nor doth she indulge her self in over much sleep, but is an early riser before the break of day; to

16. So far she is from wasting her husband's estate, that by her prudent manage-

17. *She girdeth her loyns with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.*

refuses any pains: but nimbly bestirs her self, and goes roundly (as we say) about her business: nay, exercises her arms to the strongest labours, both within doors and without. *See Arg. [k].*

18. *She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night.*

what great profit her traffick yields, she doth not conclude her work with the day; but continues it as much in the night as can be spared from necessary sleep. *See Arg. [l].*

19. *She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.*

but twists the thred or the yarn with her own fingers; and winds them with her own hands.

20. *She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.*

not onely for getting all she can, but for giving liberally, out of her gains, to needy people; whom she supplies cheerfully as well as bountifully; and extends her charity not onely to those who are near, but to those who are remoter from her,

21. *She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet.*

prudence withall, that her own Family and domestick Servants are in no danger to suffer hereby, in the hardest winter: for she provides them with change of raiment, for the several seasons, and with double garments when the weather is cold; nay, not onely clothes them, but adorns them so, that they may appear in a splendid manner, when they are to wait upon her. *See Arg. [m].*

17. And as her diligence is unwearied, so she is neither slow in her dispatches, nor

18. For, finding by sweet experience not onely how wholesome labour is, but

19. And she doth not think it beneath her quality to put her hands to the spindle: her own fingers; and

20. Which she stretches out with no less forwardness to relieve the poor: being

21. Yet such is her

22. *She maketh her self coverings of tapestry, her clothing is silk and purple.*

to it: in which her greatness is not the less, but the more conspicuous; because they are of her own making. See Arg. [m].

23. *Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.*

into the Courts of Judicature, and sits among the Senators of the Country: who call him a happy man in such a wife, as doth him honour, and eases him of all his cares, but onely those of the publick business; which her wisdom, diligence and prudent management, gives him leisure wholly to attend.

24. *She maketh fine linen, and selleth it, and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.*

her family; making, for instance, very fine linen, with embroidered belts, and girdles curiously wrought; which she sells to the Phœnician Merchant.

25. *Strength and honour are her clothing, and she shall rejoyce in time to come.*

her mind; her modest, comely and decent behaviour; her generous and honourable way of dealing with every one: which (accompanied with the forenamed diligence, &c.) make her so happy, that they free her from all fear of what may be hereafter; and prepare her to meet old age, and death it self, with joyfull satisfaction. See Arg. [n].

26. *She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness.*

talkative, so she loves not to talk of frivolous, but of serious things;

22. The furniture of her House also is very noble, and her own apparel suitable

23. And so are her husband's robes; which make him noted, when he comes

24. For such is her industry, that she exercises more arts than one or two, to enrich

25. But her principal ornaments are, the firmness, constancy and vigour of

26. Unto which add, this singular grace; that as she is neither silent nor

things; of which, when occasion serves, she discourses pertinently and judiciously, not expressing her passion but her wisdom: which shews it self, not onely in the constant softness and sweetness of her unprovoking language; but in the instructions and exhortations she gives unto doing good, exercising mercy, living peaceably and lovingly together; which is the Lesson she inculcates every where.

27. *She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.*

and manners of every one; whom she neither suffers to gad abroad at their pleasure, nor to labour at home without good instructions: but teaches them how to live as they ought; and by this, if she did nothing else, deserves the bread she eats.

28. *Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her:*

and to make provision for them, excites them, when they are grown up, to extoll her virtues: happy is the husband of such a wife, whom he can never sufficiently commend; but having recited all her praises, saith,

29. *Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.*

of a vertuous wife; and of all the wives that have done worthily, and mightily advanced the state of their family, there were never any comparable unto thee; whose merits far transcend them all.

30. *Favour is deceitfull, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.*

ly features: but, alas! as the greatest beauty soon fades and vanishes, so many ill qualities may lie concealed under goodly looks (which will utterly spoil all the happiness that

27. But especially in her own family, where she narrowly observes the motions

28. Happy are the Sons of such a mother, whose care both of their good Educa-

29. Daughters may doe much by their houswifry, but nothing like to the care

30. A handsome shape and gracefull behaviour is very taking; and so is a good complexion and love-

that a man promised himself, in such a choice) and therefore a truly religious woman, who dare not any way offend the Lord, is that amiable person, and she alone, who will please a man always, and deserve perpetual praises.

31. *Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates.*

31. Let every one extoll her vertue, for I cannot do it enough; let her not

want the just commendations of her pious labours: but while some are magnified for the nobleness of the stock from whence they spring, others for their fortune, others for their beauty, others for other things; let the good deeds which she her self hath done be publickly praised in the greatest Assemblies; where if all men should be silent, her own works will declare her excellent worth.

T H E E N D.



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